Flashback

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society

Volume 74, No. 1
Spring 2024

The Fayetteville Music Scene
"The Jazz Age"

Buddy Hayes on the trumpet leads the Buddy Hayes Orchestra with its special style of "jump blues."

Washington County Historical Society

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Flashback

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Preserving our past for future generations

Volume 74 Spring 2024 Number 1

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On the cover:
The Buddy Hayes Orchestra, led by Hayes on the trumpet, included Clifford "Half Pint" Thompson on drums, Royce Jones on trombone, and Jo Jo Thompson on piano. They were regulars on the Fayetteville music scene in the late 1940s and early '50s. Photo courtesy Rockwood Club Facebook page.

Remembering the Lives of Robert Kidd and William Clingman Raper

Winner of the 2023 WCHS writing competition Walter J. Lemke Prize

By Susan Parks-Spencer

Prior to the Civil War, many Washington County landowners depended on the labor of enslaved men, women, and children to work in their fields or homes until they were legally freed upon the ratification of the 13th Amendment by Congress on December 6, 1865.[1] The majority of Washington County's enslaved people was concentrated around Cane Hill and Fayetteville. In 1860 the Black population in Washington County numbered a little more than 1,500, but 10 years later the number had dropped to 674.[2]

It's usually quite difficult researching the lives of Black Americans before and even after the Civil War. Among the few official documents that recorded enslaved individuals were the Federal Slave Schedules. However, these mainly recorded the enslaver's information that included their name, how many enslaved individuals were owned, had escaped, had been freed or "manumitted," and the number of "Slave houses." Only hashmarks were used to identify the age, gender, and "color" of the enslaved men, women, and children.

Two Black men who remained in Washington County after the Civil War were Robert Kidd and William Clingman Raper, whose last name

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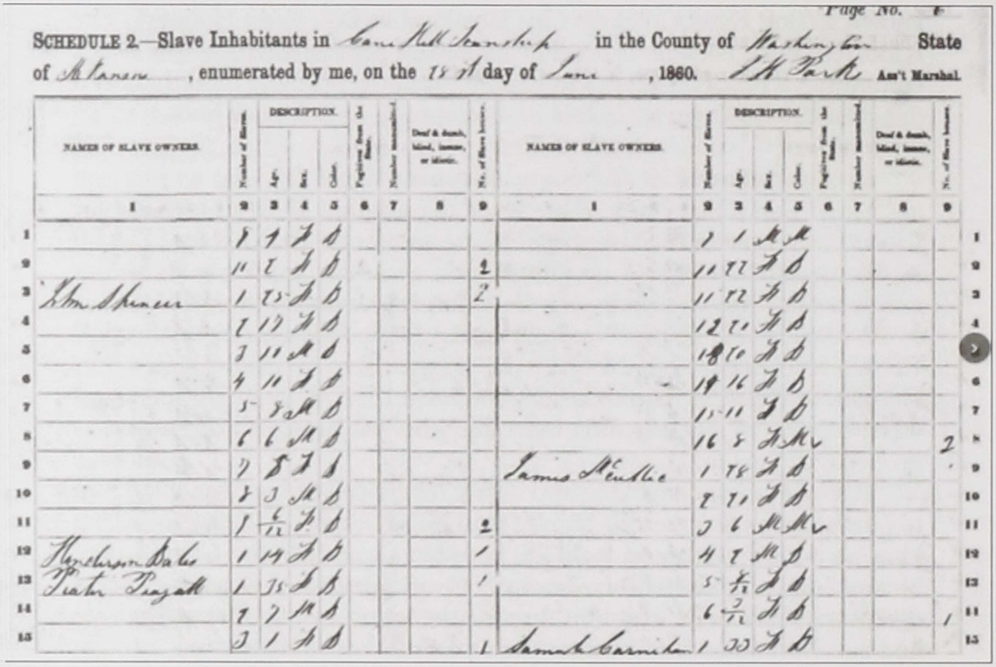
Susan Parks-Spencer is a fifth-generation west Washington County resident who enjoys researching and writing articles about the history of that area. Her most recent book is At War and on the Home Front, *published in 2020.*



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SCHEDULE 2.—Slave Inhabitants in Cane Hill Township in the County of Washington State of Arkansas, enumerated by me, on the 15th day of June, 1860. J. K. Park Ass't Marshal.

NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.			Fugitives from the State.	Number manumitted.	Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	No. of Slave Houses.	NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.			Fugitives from the State.	Number manumitted.	Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.	No. of Slave Houses.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	1	1								1	1						
2	11	2						1		11	11						
3 John Spencer	1	25						2		11	12						
4	2	11								12	10						
5	3	11								18	10						2
6	4	11								19	16						
7	5									11	11						
8	6	6								16	5						2
9	7	5							James McCubbin	1	78						
10	8	3								2	71						
11	1	6/12						2		3	6						
12 Henderson Bales	1	19						1		4	2						
13 Peter Pagett	1	35						1		5	5/12						
14	7	7								6	2/12						1
15	3	1						1	Samuel Carmichael	1	33						

Detail from the 1860 Slave Schedule from Cane Hill Township. "1860 U.S. Federal Census – Slave Schedules," *Ancestry*. Accessed December 10, 2021, at https://bit.ly/340Gyhv. [3]

was often recorded as "Roper." Both became well-known and respected citizens in their communities. Through the use of official documents and articles from local authors, enough information can be gathered to highlight the lives of both individuals.

Robert "Bob" Kidd of Cane Hill took the last name of his enslaver, Tandy Kee Kidd. His exact birthdate is unknown, which was common among enslaved individuals, but according to census records his birthplace was Arkansas, most likely in Cane Hill around 1840. On January 8, 1870, Methodist minister Isaac Brown officiated the marriage rites between the 28-year-old Kidd and Ann Shofner, age 21, in Washington County.[4] Family connections between landowners Tandy Kidd and Gabriel Shofner, as well as statistical information from the latter's 1860 Slave Schedule, strongly suggest that Ann's surname came from Shofner's family.[5]

The Kidd's first child, William, was probably born in the early 1870s, followed by Elija, Lula, and James.[6] In January 1872, Bob Kidd and Cane Hill resident William "Bill" Raper, together became the owners of 80 acres about three miles southwest of downtown Prairie Grove. Raper paid for the entire property, which cost $400.[7]

Kidd and his young family were soon living on and farming a portion of the 80 acres. Their cabin was located near a stream that became

known as Bob Kidd Creek and his farmland as Bob Kidd Hollow.[8] The Kidd residence became a popular gathering place for the nearby Black community's residents. Bob Kidd and his fiddle reportedly hosted many a dance at the family's cabin, and he became "especially well known as an entertainer."[9]

In September 1879, Bill Raper and his wife, Mary, who was known as "May," sold a little more than 46 of the original 80 acres to Kidd for $150. The remainder of the property was bought by T.J. Kalb for $262.50 in August 1881.[10] There's no information about Raper's early life before and just after the Civil War, but he is possibly listed in the 1870 census as 23-year-old "C Raper" working in the Cane Hill area as a laborer.[11] Census records and other documents suggest Raper was born in either Georgia or Raleigh, North Carolina, around 1850. Though it's unknown when he arrived in Cane Hill, most likely he was brought to Arkansas as an enslaved person.

Raper's years of working and saving his money not only enabled him to purchase the 80 acres for himself and Bob Kidd in 1872, but five years later he bought two acres for $300 between Cane Hill and Clyde where he and May established their home.[12] Over a period of at least 15 years the couple had eight children, but by the summer of 1900 only three had survived and were living at their parent's home: Benjamin, age 24; Homer, age 20; and Elmer, age 9.[13] At least six of the children may be buried in the historic Bean Cemetery in Lincoln.[14] The two eldest sons and their father worked as day laborers, possibly in one of the local mills around Cane Hill.[15]

It's unknown what happened to May, but in 1903 Raper married Cane Hill resident Maggie "Mag" Deffebaugh.[16] The couple was living in Cane Hill in 1910 with Elmer and two of Mag's sons, Charlie and Hobert. All four men were listed as laborers working odd jobs.[17] In 1919, Mag died and was buried at Bean Cemetery.[18]

It appears that between 1910 and 1920, Bill Raper began a teaching career in the area's Black schools. This change from a manual laborer to a teacher may have been due to his age, since he was 69 years old in 1920. The pay for Black instructors was very low, so he most likely taught at several schools. In Cane Hill, the local school was known as Happy Hollow, and one of its teachers listed was a William (Bill) "Rapson." Another Black school where Raper probably taught was located around Hogeye. Annie Buchanan Peele attended school intermittently there from 1909 to 1914 and remembered a Mr. "Roper" from Cane Hill as one of her instructors.[19]

Raper may actually have been a teacher longer than the census records indicate. A 1975 *Flashback* article listed brief biographies of Black residents buried in Bean Cemetery, and the entry for Raper described him as someone who expected his students to have a rigorous work ethic, just as he had throughout his life:

"Bill Raper, a school master in Happy Hollow school for many years. A strict disciplinarian, he did not believe in sparing the rod and was as strict out of school as in."[20]

With the exception of Raper's burial location in Bean Cemetery, the latter part of his life remains unknown, including his date of death. On the other hand, more information on Bob Kidd's life has been recorded and can be found through official documents as well as articles in several periodicals.

As the Kidd children grew older, they gradually began to leave the family farm to work elsewhere. In 1900, Lula, along with a Maggie Kidd who may have been a younger sister, were working as "servants" for Laura Anderson at her home on Block Street in Fayetteville.[21] Kidd's wife, Ann, passed away sometime between 1880 and 1910 and is presumably buried in Bean Cemetery. In the 1910 and 1920 census records, Bob Kidd and his eldest son, William, were the only remaining family members at their home.[22]

By the fall of 1921, Kidd's health was in decline. On October 28, Prairie Grove physician Dr. E.G. McCormick examined Kidd and described his condition as "*In extremis*" or close to death. Bob Kidd died the following day, and the death certificate listed the primary cause as "probably due to bronchitis," as well as "old age." The uncertainty over Kidd's age is shown by the two discrepancies between the 1920 census that recorded his age as 80 years, and the death certificate issued a year later estimating his age as "about 90 years."[23]

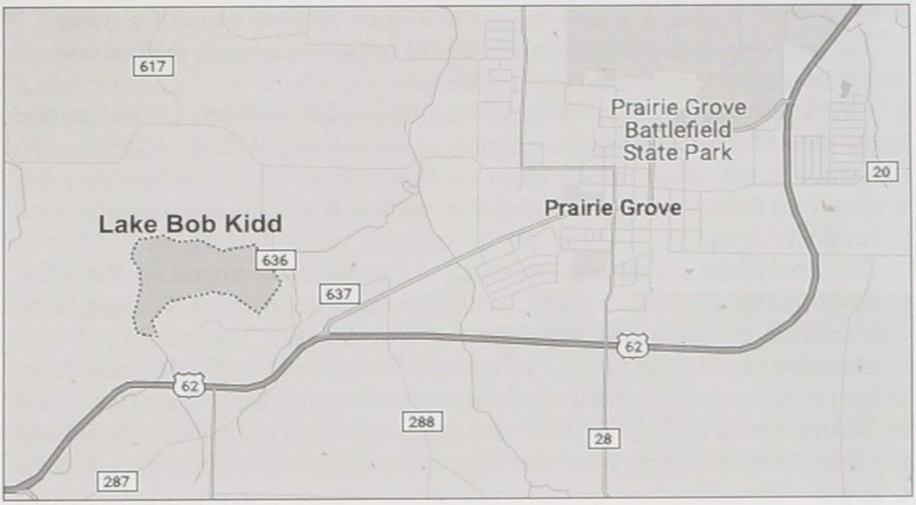
Kidd was buried in the Bean Cemetery and a simple sandstone rock with his name hand-carved on the stone was placed at the burial site.[24] Sometime after the mid-1980s the rock was replaced with a more modern headstone.

The death of Bob Kidd attracted not only local interest, but also earned a mention in Arkansas' two state newspapers. The *Arkansas Gazette* had a one-sentence article stating that "'Uncle' Robert Kidd, well known Washington county [sic] negro, believed to be about 100 years old, died at his home near here Friday."[25] A bit more information was included in the *Arkansas Democrat's* report:

FORMER SLAVE DIES.

Fayetteville, Nov. 1. — Bob Kidd, slave of pre-Civil War days, and whose age was variously estimated at from 90 to 104 years, died Sunday at Prairie Grove, according to word received here today. Only a few of the slave-time negroes are still living in Washington county.

Kidd's obituary notice in the *Arkansas Democrat*. "Former Slave Dies," *Arkansas Democrat*, November 1, 1921, p. 4. Accessed December 14, 2021, at https://bit.ly/3EPYb0a, accessed December 14, 2021.



Map shows the location of Bob Kidd Lake outside Prairie Grove (about 16 miles from Fayetteville). Map courtesy Google (n.d.). [Bob Kidd Lake, Arkansas]. Accessed December 26, 2023, at https://www.google.com/maps/place/Bob+Kidd+Lake/@35.9718027,-94.3550217,17z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x87c978550734acbd:0x3fa01fd6fc84ce3d!8m2!3d35.9709383!4d-94.3603669!16s%2Fg%2F1tftlr6t?entry=ttu.

After Kidd's death, his farm fell into neglect, and the property was forfeited to the State of Arkansas in 1933 for unpaid taxes.[27] A section of Highway 62 West had been built on a portion of the old farm with a bridge constructed over the creek and signs placed on either side of the bridge that mistakenly identified it as "Badd Kidd Creek." In the 1960s these signs were replaced with ones that changed the name to "Budd Kidd Creek." These two variations of Kidd's name prompted discussions among local residents as to Kidd's actual first name and how to have the signs replaced with the correct title.

During the mid-to-late 1960s, the state's Soil Conservation Service, along with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), began preliminary plans to create a reservoir between Prairie Grove and Lincoln by damming the creek.[28] The project also included naming the new lake after "Budd" Kidd, and this news had Prairie Grove native Sarah Carl stopping by the *Prairie Grove Enterprise* office to speak to the newspaper's owner and editor, George Wiswell, about Kidd's actual name. Carl remembered her mother talking about "Bob Kidd Creek" that ran through "Bob Kidd Hollow" and was named after an "old negro family." Wiswell's story about Carl's recollection first appeared in the *Enterprise* and was reprinted several days later in the October 15, 1968, issue of the *Northwest Arkansas Times*.[29]

Planning continued for the lake development. Land purchases were made, and construction was started in the early 1970s on 194.9 acres west

Bob Kidd 1824 – 1924
In memory of Bob Kidd, born a slave in 1824. He worked hard in the fields of N.W. Arkansas to acquire 40 acres of land to build a home and raise a family. He was well-liked by the local residents who named this lake in his honor. He is buried in the Bean Cemetery, at Lincoln, Arkansas.

Bob Kidd's plaque was in all likelihood funded and placed by the Prairie Grove Bicentennial Committee sometime in the late 1970s or 1980s. Kidd's birth year is unknown, but it's well-documented that his date of death occurred on October 29, 1921. Photograph courtesy Susan Parks-Spencer.

of Prairie Grove. The lake opened in 1975, and to the irritation of local residents, was officially designated as Budd Kidd Lake.[30] Sarah Carl's older sister, Lena Helm, became one of the more vocal Prairie Grove citizens who continued to lobby for Bob Kidd's name to replace the inaccurate "Budd Kidd" on highway signs and elsewhere. In a 1986 *Flashback* article, Helm was interviewed and recalled the close ties between her family and the Kidd's:

> "...the Bob Kidd family worked for her folks. When Bob Kidd's daughter married and moved to Fayetteville, she named her first daughter 'Lena' after Mrs. Helm."[31]

Lena Helm belonged to the Walnut Grove Cherry Belle Club, whose members included others who also remembered the Kidd family. In the early-to-mid 1980s, this group submitted a petition to the Arkansas Highway Department (AHD) asking them to replace the existing "Budd Kidd Lake" signs with Bob Kidd's name. Three decades of persistence finally paid off when the AHD agreed to correct the error.[32]

At present time, this lake is the only one owned by the AGFC that is named after a formerly enslaved individual. Its official name is Lake Bob Kidd. The AGFC website states that the lake's "claim to fame" is its sportfish of largemouth bass, channel catfish, crappie, bluegill, and redear sunfish. The area around the lake is also popular among birdwatchers. A plaque commemorating Kidd's life is located next to a wooden fishing pier and dock, which are the only structures built around the lake.[33]

After the Civil War, Bob Kidd and Bill Raper started their lives as free men with very little, but through hard work and determination both supported their families and inspired others within their community, especially through music and teaching. Even though details about much of their lives have been lost, what is known about the two men should be remembered and celebrated as important contributions to our local history.

Endnotes

[1]"13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Abolition of Slavery," National Archives. Accessed May 7, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3FDVlME.
[2]Members of The Washington County Retired Teachers Association, "Black Schools in Washington County," *School Days, School Days,...The History of Education in Washington County, 1830-1950*, (Fayetteville High School West Campus Area Vocational-Technical School, 1986), p. 57.
[3]"1860 U.S. Federal Census—Slave Schedules," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 6, 2023, at https://bit.ly/340Gyhv.
[4]"Arkansas, U.S., Washington County Marriage Records, 1845-1941." *Ancestry*. Accessed May 7, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3lA9Md8.
[5]In 1860, Gabriel Shofner was the enslaver of three females ages 44, 15, and 10. "1860 U.S. Federal Census—Slave Schedules," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 6, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3DztMmv. Tandy K. and Nancy Dyer Kidd's daughter, Margaret Isabella, married Gabriel Shofner's eldest son, William, in Washington County in 1868; they were living in Cane Hill in 1870. "Arkansas, U.S., Washington County Marriage Records, 1845-1941," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 6, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3oYSNTX, and "1870 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 6, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3xtPzKF.
[6]"1880 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 7, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3lzZ 9XV.
[7]"Land Record Search 1834-1991," Washington County, Arkansas Deed Record V-414-415. Accessed May 9, 2023, at https://bit.ly/2Z76u8N.
[8]"1880 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 7, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3lzZ9XV; "Bob Kidd," Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. Accessed May 9, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3pOOWrz, and Juel Benbrook Hamlen Giles, "Bob Kidd Lake," *Flashback*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (May 1986), p. 44.
[9]Izola Preston, "Bean Cemetery and Bob Kidd Lake," *Flashback*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Winter 2006), pp. 27-28, and "Site named for former slave," *Springfield (MO) News-Leader*, May 22, 2003, p. 9E.
[10]"Land Record Search 1834-1991," Washington County, Arkansas Deed Record E2-215. Accessed May 10, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3GWtJTh, and "Land Record Search 1834-1991," Washington County, Arkansas Deed Record G2-632. Accessed May 10, 2023 at https://bit.ly/3skswBo, accessed May 10, 2023.
[11]"1870 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 5, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3b4g TVb.
[12]"Land Record Search 1834-1991," Washington County, Arkansas Deed Record S2-497. Accessed May 8, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3qFyfPQ.
[13]"1900 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 7, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3CaFRhG.
[14]An "Infant Raper" with no birth or death dates is one of the burials on the Luginbuel Funeral Home site, and an M.C. and Mary Raper had five of their children buried at Bean Cemetery. "Bean Cemetery," Luginbuel Funeral Home. Accessed May 7, 2023 at https://bit.ly/3Epa8dt; Conrad Russell, "Bean Cemetery," *Flashback*, Vol. 25, No. 3, August 1975, p. 15, and "1900 United States Federal Census."
[15]"Arkansas, Birth Certificates, 1914-1917," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 10, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3pw7H4k.
[16]"W C Raper, Arkansas, U.S., County Marriages Index, 1845-1941," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 10, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3pnQauQ.

[17]"1910 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 9, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3b1ikUx.
[18]"Mag Raper," *Find A Grave*. Accessed May 9, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3vI0z6g.
[19] Members of The Washington County Retired Teachers Association, *School Days, School Days,... The History of Education in Washington County, 1830-1950* (Fayetteville High School West Campus Area Vocational-Technical School, 1986), pp. 54, 60.
[20]Russell, pp. 13-18.
[21]"Lula Kidd, 1900 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 7, 2023, at https://bit.ly/30pcryk.
[22]"1910 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 9, 2023, at https://bit.ly/30dRUN7, and "1920 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 10, 2023, at https://bit.ly/2YyKpzX.
[23]"1920 United States Federal Census," and "State of Arkansas Certificate of Death," *Ancestry*. Accessed May 10, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3JHxBtM.
[24]Giles, p. 44.
[25]"Aged Negro Dies," *Arkansas Gazette*, October 31, 1921, p. 2. Accessed May 5, 2023. https://bit.ly/3lCDbDz.
[26]Ibid.
[27]"Land Record Search 1834-1991," Washington County, Arkansas Deed Record 301-329 and 301-330. Accessed May 3, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3BJlCr8.
[28]"Editor's Say From the NWA Press: George Wiswell's 'Just A Minute,' in the *Prairie Grove Enterprise*," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, October 15, 1968, p. 4. Accessed May 5, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3FQHvGY. More information on the funding of Bob Kidd Lake is provided by John I. Smith, chairman of the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District, Fayetteville, "From the Readers' Viewpoint: Editors Corrected," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, September 25, 1975, p. 4, Newspapers.com. Accessed May 5, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3EZF1Vz.
[29]"Editor's Say From the NWA Press: George Wiswell's 'Just A Minute,'" p. 4.
[30]"Bob Kidd," Arkansas Game & Fish Commission.
[31]Giles, p. 44.
[32]Ibid.
[33]"Lake Bob Kidd Offers Exceptional Sport," *Springfield (MO) News-Leader*, May 22, 2003, p. 9E; "Bob Kidd," Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, and "Bob Kidd Lake," Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society. Accessed May 4, 2023, at https://bit.ly/3CHvyC4. The dock and fishing pier are named after the late Claud Nations of Prairie Grove, an avid fisherman and outdoorsman.
[34]"Recreation Area Planned For Lake," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, September 20, 1975, p. 2.

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Part II: The Story of Fayetteville's Black Diamond Orchestra Continues with ...

"The Jazz Age"

Excerpted from The Music Men of Turn-of-the-Century Fayetteville, *by Denele Campbell, 2022.*

By Denele Campbell

Meanwhile, jazz had arrived. With no record of the Black Diamond Orchestra's repertoire and how it may have evolved over the 30-plus years of their existence, we can only assume their music evolved alongside the popular styles of the rest of the nation. While older music forms like string bands survived, people wanted to hear and dance to lively new music like ragtime, blues, and jazz.

> By the 20th century (as ragtime became popular), various forms of the blues helped define, musically, the experience of many black southerners. The blues was rooted rhythmically and lyrically to the work songs that served a multiplicity of roles within the enslaved plantation culture of the South.[1]...[T]he blues was linked directly to black America. The origin and definition of the blues, James Cone has noted, "cannot be understood independent of the suffering that black people endured in the context of white racism and hate." "The blues," therefore, "tells us about black people's attempt to carve out a significant existence in a very trying situation. The purpose of the blues is to give structure to black existence in a context where color means rejection and humiliation."[2]

Denele Campbell writes frequently on the history of Washington County. This article is taken from her book, The Music Men of Turn-of-the-Century Fayetteville. *Her latest release,* The Wild Men of West Fork, *is available at Amazon.com.*

Like the slow process of minstrelsy's change from whites in blackface to actual Blacks performing, the mainstream arrival of jazz on radio and recordings came first with white performers copying Black renderings of this new music.

> As ragtime and the blues began to circulate, New Orleans incubated music that would come to be called jazz, and the unique social construction of the city provided a cadre of musicians as well as an audience to support and sustain a particular form of musical expression.... [J]azz emerged from an unplanned collision of ragtime, the blues, minstrel shows, vaudeville routines, brass band repertoires, string band songs, dance music, marching music, and funeral music. The result was an improvised sound that, within a few years, would captivate the nation.[3]
>
> Starting in the late 1890s, Charles "Buddy" Bolden's band is thought to have played ragtime with improvised embellishments, and by the turn of the century, many New Orleans bands were playing in a collective improvisational style.... The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, a white group, ...[copied Bolden's style and] was the first to record (1917) with their Livery Stable Blues.[4] [Listen here: https://www.loc.gov/item/jukebox-186254/]

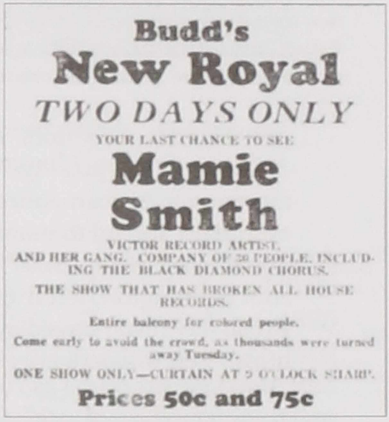
Black jazz recordings weren't far behind.

> Among the contenders for the first Black musicians to make a jazz record are pianist Charles Prince's Band, who recorded "Memphis Blues" in 1914 and then in 1915 he became the first to record a version of WC Handy's "St. Louis Blues." In April 1917, Charles Prince's Band recorded "Hong Kong," a "Jazz One-Step." Not to be outdone, WC Handy's band was making recordings in September 1917. There was also Wilbur Sweatman's Original Jass Band, and the Six Brown Brothers in the summer of 1917, though there is a debate as to whether some of these records are jazz or its close cousin, ragtime.[5]

Bringing these sounds to Fayetteville, Arkansas, didn't require live performances. Guisinger's Music House in Fayetteville advertised their Victrola record players starting in 1915. The first recorded Black singer was Mamie Smith, who—with her band the Jazz Hounds—recorded "Crazy Blues" in 1920; the recording was wildly popular. She performed in Fayetteville in 1927, assisted by the Black Diamond Chorus.[6] Her success led other record companies to record Black jazz performers and spread the music across the country.

In a rare peek into the Black Diamond's performances, the newspaper captured key information in this notice from 1920:

> 1920 Jan 10 Flappers Have Jazz Evening at Elks Club
>
> Miss Eav White was hostess last evening to about forty young people of the flapper set, entertaining at Elks Club where Toby's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Mamie Smith
VICTOR RECORD ARTIST,
AND HER GANG, COMPANY OF 20 PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE BLACK DIAMOND CHORUS.
THE SHOW THAT HAS BROKEN ALL HOUSE RECORDS.
Entire balcony for colored people.
Come early to avoid the crowd, as thousands were turned away Tuesday.
ONE SHOW ONLY—CURTAIN AT 9 O'CLOCK SHARP.
Prices 50c and 75c

Top: Four women dance the Charleston, ca. 1920s. Photograph in the public domain.
Below: Promotion for a performance by Mamie Smith. She performed in Fayetteville in 1927.

two piece jazz orchestra gave any required inspiration to feet already eager for the hardwood floor…. [No information found on Toby.]

Despite plenty of criticism about its origins and racial stereotypes and the "aggressive rhythms" of "contemporary savages," jazz quickly gained a fervent appreciation in all classes of society. One of several local white jazz groups was the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity Jazz Orchestra, performing in the University of Arkansas's Semi-Centennial Parade in June 1922. The Arkansas Travelers Jazz Orchestra performed at the Arkansas Boosters' Club in March 1923, and Owen Mitchell's orchestra added jazz to its repertoire.

While Fayetteville society employed the Black Diamond Orchestra and participated in programs offered by members of the Black community, the role of Black persons as entertainers fell into the old stereotype that had followed Blacks during slavery. It was, however, a step up that they would perform only if paid and with programs they determined. That said,[7]

> Black jazz musicians were less credited for their invention and innovation of jazz music. Jazz music created a sense of identity, originality, and social cohesion among black musicians, but they were seldom credited with inventing it.

It was a mixed bag, then, for the musicians participating in the Black Diamond Orchestra and other Black groups like the Jubilee Singers—good to the extent they could earn money with their talents and be appreciated by whites; bad to the extent society was still segregated. It was a step in the right direction as the 1920s progressed that the orchestra received invitations to so many regional venues. Some reports state that they were a "well known minstrel organization [which] gives a number of minstrel stunts including some 'buck and wing' dances."[8]

The music as well as the dance broke many social barriers. Dances like the Lindy Hop and the Black Bottom spread like wildfire in white America and, ultimately, around the world.

Top: The Lindy Hop originated in Black communities in Harlem, New York, and involved a new style of music: Swing. Photograph in the public domain.
Below: Singer-actress Edith Wilson performing the Black Bottom (dance) in the London stage production of Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds" (1926). Photograph from *Wikipedia Commons.*

> The black bottom is a dance which became popular during 1920s amid the Jazz Age. It was danced solo or by couples. Originating among African Americans in the rural South, the black bottom eventually spread to mainstream American culture and became a national craze in the 1920s. The dance was most famously performed by Ann Pennington, a star of the Ziegfeld Follies, who performed it in a Broadway revue staged by Ziegfeld's rival George White in 1926. (See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Bottom_(dance))

Further commentary regarding benefit performances at the UofA Peabody Hall and Leverett Elementary stated that "Colored programs are becoming quite the thing in Fayetteville, with an aroused interest in negro music and African folklore."[9] Participants at the Leverett benefit included Embus Young, band leader; Osburn Cox, violin; Sam Young, bass viol; and Odie Wright, banjo. Also performing were Clara Hayes, Lora Magnus, Comel Payne, Odie Wright and wife Katherine, Thaddeus Young, and Melba Young. Odie Wright performed the buck and wing dance. Other venues included the Elks Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, and Modern Woodmen. Regionally, they performed on day goodwill tours sponsored by Fayetteville businessmen to Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville in addition to individual event bookings.

Scheduled performances were duly reported in local news:

1925 Jul 30 Huntsville reunion.

1925 Nov 25 colored benefit at St. James.

1926 Jun 8 Lewis Chevrolet Co. auction sale of Coupes, Sedans, Roadsters, Tourings and Trucks with Black Diamond Orchestra.

1926 Sep 23 Chi Omega rush party.

1926 Sep 28 Merchandise Expo at Square including Charleston contest between "three little colored girls" and music by Black Diamond Orchestra.

Above: Notice about the Huntsville Reunion featuring the Black Diamond Jazz Band.
Right: Clara Hayes' mother, Susan Marshbanks Manuel. Photograph courtesy Betty Davis.

1927 Mar 2 Mamie Smith show at Royal Theater with "entire balcony for colored people" and "Company of 30 people including the Black Diamond Chorus."

1928 Apr 18 Lions Club meeting.

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Like most musicians anytime or anywhere, members of the Black Diamond Orchestra kept their day jobs. Sam Young Jr. worked as a laborer (1870), shoemaker (1880), and butcher (1920). The tornado of 1880 which swept across the town square destroyed his family's home on East Center, so he set about gathering up spare lumber wherever he could find it and rebuilt. His son Sam worked at several jobs, including shoemaker (1880), day laborer (1900), and janitor at Palace Drug Store (1910). In 1900, Embus Young worked as day labor. Even though Sam Sr. and wife remained unable to read or write throughout their lifetimes, they ensured that their children were educated.

Despite access to education, Blacks were locked into menial, labor-intensive jobs. The 1939 *Fayetteville City Directory* lists the residence of William Embus Young as 157 E. Mountain. Also at that address were Etha [Ether} Young (cook at the Future Farmers of America house), Inez Young (maid at Chi Omega sorority), Quincy Young (cleaner at LaNier's Cleaners), and Sherman Young (later Sherman Morgan), musician.

After serving in the navy in World War II, Morgan returned to Fayetteville and opened a café and billiard room that became a popular watering hole and a place for Black music over the next four decades. Variously described as a honky tonk and juke joint, Sherman's Tavern saw its share of music and dance.

Clara Hayes, like her mother, took in laundry to help support her family. In 1910 and 1920 census records, her husband Leonard worked as porter in a barber shop. Both were literate. By 1940, Clara, now widowed, oversaw her household at 311 Olive with her youngest daughter Betty (14) as well as her three grandchildren (by Christine and Joe Thompson), and
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a boarder. At this point, Clara earned income as a servant in a private home.

The following year, editor of the *Northwest Arkansas Times* Lessie Stringfellow Read interviewed Clara and wrote an extensive article about her.

> …She is the grandmother of the little colored boy dancer, "Half Pint," and granddaughter of one of Fayetteville's best known and best loved old-time slave mammies, Aunt Tabitha Taylor, who died here about 10 years ago.…Aunt Tabitha Taylor came to Arkansas as a child from Kentucky with her "White folks" in the 1850s. After the war, she worked in many of the old-time local families, that of Mr. and Mrs. Lafayette Gregg, the Walkers, and others, as did her daughter, Susie Manuel, mother of Clara, who, although past 70 years old, still does her day's washing, six days a week as does Clara herself.
>
> The "before-the-Civil War" home in which Clara lives has housed five generations of her family….The house, in appearance from the outside, is amazing when you go within to find seven rooms. The house is beautifully kept at all times with its old style twin-beds "handed down" from early Arkansas pioneers; its love seats, its parlor with piano and radio, its dining room, its kitchen and its four bedrooms. There are chests and closets stacked with clean linen, a large circular dining table, china cabinet and sideboard, all loaded with Clara's treasures, valuable to her as heirlooms rather than for their intrinsic value, she says.
>
> Clara married early, had seven children, and has assisted in raising the 13 grandchildren. She gets up in the morning usually at 3:30 or 4 and works through a busy day, washing and ironing sometimes long after night-fall….

The article details some of Clara's collection of antique glass, and describes the "picturesque old place" as landscaped with roses, lilies, and many other flowers interwoven with rock work created by Clara herself.[10]

In community affairs, in 1922, Sam Young offered part of his property for a dumping ground where town residents could dispose of ashes and cans. He also offered his services in hauling the materials to be placed in the dump, sited in a gullied slope on his property north of the Confederate Cemetery.[11] Clara participated in many civic activities, not only leading the church choir, Jubilee Singers, and other vocal music projects, but part of a group seeking funds for City Hospital X-ray equipment (1923) and serving as chair of a town "cleanup and paint" committee during Fayetteville's beautification programs. She, her mother Susie Manuel, Sam Young (555 E. Center), and poet George Ballard (Tin Cup) were among entries to the town's "Landscaping of Entire Yard" competition in June 1930.

For a time, the Black Diamond Orchestra provided popular entertainment not only for the white folks, but—perhaps more important-

From a Movietone Newsreel, 1926. The blog post explains this was silent footage of Bert Firman's 1926 recording of "Charleston Charley." The dancer is Bee Jackson, in front of the Jenkins Orphanage in Charleston, South Carolina. "The orphanage band in the background, which toured the U.S. and Europe, produced such great jazz artists as William 'Cat' Anderson, Jabbo Smith, and Count Basie's long time guitar player Freedie Greene." Accessed March 17, 2022, at http://pancocojams.blogspot.com/2020/09/film-clip-of-1920s-charleston-dance.html.

ly—for the pleasure of the Black community. Spontaneous dances and singalongs sprang up whenever people gathered and musicians happened to have an instrument on hand. Dance crazes like the Charleston allowed for moments of sheer exhilaration.

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Inevitably, as with most musical groups, personnel problems complicated the continuance of the Black Diamond Orchestra. In 1924, Odie Wright was fined for disturbing the peace, probably having to do with alcohol abuse. His 1923 marriage to Katherine McBride ended, and he married Hattie Parker in 1932 only for her to divorce him in 1935 for unspecified "indignities."

Osburn Cox, born in 1876 Arkansas, was arrested in 1916 for a disturbance over a craps game at his house where buddies were drinking and things got out of hand. At the time of the 1920 census, he worked as a dormitory cook. He was arrested again in 1927, charged with selling liquor, and sent to the penitentiary, length of sentence not known.

Zolean/Zoline Hayes was unusual as a female in her early leadership of the orchestra. In 1927 she married Johnny Temple. By 1940, she had returned to her maiden name. In 1941, she married R. T. Boatman and lived in another part of the state.

Married in 1914, Embus Young is found in the 1939 city directory and is named along with his wife Marguerite (Bonner) Young on the 1943 birth certificate of their son Verdell (delayed certificate of 1916 birth). The 1950 census lists Embus, widowed at age 73, living with his sister Ether and two grandchildren at 157 E. Center. He died in 1953.

It was the grandchildren of Clara Hayes who subsequently carried on the performance tradition of the older generation. The last performances of record for the Black Diamond Orchestra were in August 1933 when they played for the 12th annual Elkins picnic; in January 1935 for the
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President's birthday ball program as a male quartet of Black Diamond Orchestra; and in May 1935 for a Lions Club event.

Briefly, between 1933 and 1936, a group by the name of the Ginger Band performed in several local events. First as Robinson Ginger Band "All Colored Orchestra" (June 9, 1933) and subsequently as Fred Owens and his Ginger Band, the group described as "colored entertainers from radio station KUOA." The band members were never named.[Fred Owens was white.] Throughout 1935, they were regular features of the radio station's program. They also were engaged for the following events:

Oct 5, 1934 Dance at Winslow gym for benefit.

Nov 19, 1934 Thanksgiving Dance at Armory Hall.

Sep 13, 1935 Grand opening of King Cole's Café at 901 N. College.

Nov 1, 1935 Ad: Dance at the D. A. V. Club Frank Owen's Ginger Band. [This ad appeared at least 16 times between 1935 and 1936.]

Nov 9, 1935 Colored program Community Chest Benefit @ Henderson School "White people are invited to attend and George Ballard is selling tickets. Frank Owen's Ginger Band."

Apr 14, 1936 George Ballard memorial library book shower at Henderson, music by Frank Owen's Ginger Band and dance by Half Pint Thompson.

The only other advertised Black group performing during this time period was Joe Thompson's Blue Rhythm Orchestra, mentioned in the Fayetteville newspaper only once. But Joe Thompson made many appearances as accompaniment to his son Clifford "Half Pint" Thompson, who became quite the attraction in the region. Years later, Thompson's son Jo Jo stated that his dad's band included 17 musicians. Joe Thompson died in 1940, leaving his two young sons to be raised by his mother-in-law Clara Hayes.

Clifford "Half-Pint" Thompson's first known public performance came on December 17, 1935, when the six-year-old "gave a specialty number" with his dad's orchestra at a country club event. A week later, he helped Santa distribute gifts at the Campbell-Bell Christmas party.[12]

The following June, young Thompson was featured in a goodwill tour of the region by Fayetteville businessmen and residents.

> It was a tired, hot and dusty auto caravan that returned from a goodwill tour of three Washington county and 13 Benton county towns last night. .... Half Pint Thompson, the little colored hoofer and singer from "The Hollow" was still going strong when the last stop was made at Tontitown. He sang and danced all day and had more pep than anybody. He must have danced in his sleep last night. When the band struck up, Half Pint would jump to the platform and dance, and then he would sing about ham and eggs and the music that goes round and round.[13]

Left: Sammy Davis Jr. performing tap dance, age 7 (1932). From the film "Rufus Jones for President" (1933). He may have been the inspiration for Clifford "Half Pint" Thompson's act. Accessed August 19, 2022 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4qZFDj7cAc.
Right: Clifford "Half Pint" Thompson on drums, Royce Jones on trombone, Buddy Hayes on trumpet, and Jo Jo Thompson at the piano, ca. 1954. Courtesy Rockwood Club Facebook page.

A follow-up report, published the next day, revealed that "Half-Pint Thompson, the little darky entertainer, is ready to go again. 'Next time, let's go to Muskogee, Joplin, and St. Louis,' Half-Pint said last night. Asked how old he is, he said, 'I'm six; I'll be seven when school starts.'" For the tour, he wore a red silk coat, white pants, and tall silk hat and carried a walking cane. Some of these reports described his dance as "tap."

Thompson's 1936 performance schedule also included competing at the President's Birthday Ball Amateur Night where he won the $5 first prize, dancing for the Devil's Den Civilian Conservation Corps camp, performing for the Fayetteville chapter of the Metro Club, entertaining the Democratic Women's Club (accompanied by his father), singing and dancing with the Sunset string band at the annual farm forum for Washington County farmers, and performing for the merchant's carnival sponsored by the Lions Club. In 1937-1938, he sang and danced at a Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity party and was featured at a Zeta Tau Alpha rush party with a "plantation" theme with breakfast served by "colored mammies" in old Southern costumes. A Black trio sang plantation songs and Half-Pint danced. He also performed at a Phi Kappa party/banquet dressed as a red cap where he distributed "Pied Kappa News" containing jokes about those present. "The little darky, accompanied by his father on piano, also danced several numbers."[14]

Not to be outdone by his nephews, Ralph "Buddy" Hayes pursued his love of music. In 1940, he worked at the Arcade Barber Shop (Arcade Building, annex to Mountain Inn, Center Street) as a porter and shoe

shine man, but his trumpet was never far from his hand. After a brief stint in the army in 1945, Buddy returned to Fayetteville and found employment at the UofA Barber Shop on Dickson Street. The glorious benefit of his job was a back room with a piano where he could jam whenever he had a spare moment. One of his regular jam partners was his nephew Joe "Jo Jo" Thompson.

By 1944, Buddy Hayes had put together a group known as the Buddy Hayes Orchestra. They were a regular feature at the Fayetteville Country Club and heavily booked for events at the high school, university, and area social events with their special style of "jump blues." By this point, the evolution from minstrelsy and ragtime to jazz had moved on to swing and now jump blues, described as "an up-tempo style of blues, usually played by small groups and featuring horn instruments…a precursor of rhythm and blues and rock and roll."

Buddy's group was sometimes billed as a Dixieland band, or jazz orchestra, and sometimes as a "colored orchestra." Their sounds could be heard at the local hot spots: Bubble Club, Uark Bowl, Rockwood Club, Bamboo Club, and as a regular feature on KGRH Radio (1947). The group was still performing in 1952.

As an aside, it's fascinating to note that by one of those quirks of fate that echoes down through time, the UofA Barber Shop jam sessions would become a key influence in the life of a young white man, Ronnie Hawkins, whose father also worked at the shop. Raised amid the influence of his father, uncles, and cousins playing the Arkansas-Oklahoma honky-tonk circuit in the 1930s and 1940s, Hawkins' captivation with Black music also led him to Sherman Morgan's tavern in the "Holler" which hosted countless hours of get-down music by local performers. There Hawkins would soak up the sounds that would ultimately form the heartbeat of his musical experience.

By the mid to late 1950s, Hawkins had formed his own band of white guys, Ronnie Hawkins and the Hawks, playing in Fayetteville's popular venues in a style that came to be known as "rockabilly." Seeking bigger audiences and recording opportunities, Hawkins moved his group to Canada. There, most of his "Hawks" decided they'd rather go back to Fayetteville, and Ronnie filled their spots one by one with local talent. This determination to create the best possible band led to a group that would become famous as "The Band."

Hawkins took particular interest in Jo Jo Thompson, doing what he could to expand his friend's options. Thompson later talked about Hawkins' idea for him to play at a Springdale club:

> I told Ronnie that I didn't want to go with him. He wanted me to sit in with them but I didn't want to go to Springdale because they don't like colored folk up there. We drove up to the club door and this girl was waiting there. She told him that she did not like colored folk. Ronnie told her that he didn't care what she goddamn

liked. He raised hell up there and didn't play that night at all. He wouldn't work for them people.

Even when Hawkins found success in the big time, he didn't forget his buddies back home. Bill Jones, a friend of Hawkins, noted the faithful friendship.

> I remember one killer afternoon I came over and in the driveway was a sweet '70s mint condition Cadillac coupe along with several other vehicles.... walked in and Ronnie Hawkins was there with Jo Jo and had just given the keys to Jo! Jo Jo drove that Cadillac for the rest of his life.[15]

Buddy Hayes died in 1973, and the editorial commentary on his death remarked on his character. His mother Clara, who died unremarked in 1946, would have been proud.

> ...On the surface he might be described as a good-humored barber shop philosopher. He polished shoes, true enough. But as a sort of sideline. Mostly, Buddy was a musician; a concerned citizen; and an excellent businessman. He knew the sources of community energy, and he somehow seemed to have the rare ability to distinguish sometimes subtle differences between ignorance and prejudice.
>
> ...Buddy regarded himself, with considerable honesty, as a musician. He played cornet (and trumpet) all the way from the Bubble Club to the Country Club cotillion. That was his pride as well as his pleasure.... With his horn, he could lay it down like it really, truly was. It helped, we imagine, those other times and places where one of his race could hardly dare be too candid....[16]

Buddy Hayes with Buddy Rich, date unknown. Donated photograph scanned as part of the Fayetteville Digital Image Archive Collection, Fayetteville Public Library.

The following year, a letter to the editor remarked on Hayes' ability to bridge the racial barrier:

> In 1964, I was afraid to invite a black friend [to Roger's Rec, a popular Dickson Street watering hole for the working class] for a beer, but since it was that remarkable man, Buddy Hayes, the racial barrier immediately fell, and has been down ever since.[17]

Hayes' community service, in the footsteps of his mother's efforts, included helping form the East Fayetteville Citizens Group and advocating for low-income housing. A small park in the "Holler" is named for Hayes.

In 2012, Hayes was included in Larry Foley's documentary "Up Among the Hills: The Story of Fayetteville" in his unofficial role as "Mayor of Dickson Street." By that point, Dickson Street venues formed the heart of live music for the entire region.

Meanwhile, Jo Jo Thompson had made a brief stint as a touring musician, circling from Joplin, Missouri, to Augusta, Georgia. But his heart was in Fayetteville, and he soon settled there to perform, primarily on piano. Local musicians who sometimes played with him remembered his affinity for playing in the key of A-flat, which flummoxed young musicians. Jo Jo would sip his scotch and milk cocktail and remark that A-flat "used all the black keys."

> He'd do the old black choir hand motions, fist—one more time, finger—the end. Light tap of toes meant pianissimo, stomping his leg, fortissimo. He'd turn all the knobs up, pure distortions. He had at least eight "412" cabinets [four 12-inch speakers in a cabinet] wrecked, blown up, sitting at his house.[18]

Thompson's day job as janitor at a fraternity house hardly counted as his primary occupation. He loved playing piano and singing blues. Anytime he could gather a group to jam, he was in it 100 percent. Whenever possible, he played with touring performers including B. B. King, Lonnie Brooks, Anson Funderberg, and Junior Wells, and represented Northwest Arkansas at the King Biscuit Blues Festival in Helena, Arkansas. Thompson died in 1995.

The days of jumping jazz ended. Rockabilly merged into rock 'n' roll, and Fayetteville's older generations of Black musicians left the building. Their tradition echoed through the clubs and dives for the next 50 years, until the digital age undermined the live-music scene at local venues. But artists of the 21st century now revive the blues, swing enjoys periodic renaissance, and a Dixieland group is recording in local studios. When music is that soul-deep good, it just never dies.

And, as they say, the beat goes on.

Ed. Note: Part I of Denele Campbell's article on "The Black Diamond Orchestra" appeared in the Winter 2023 issue of Flashback.

Endnotes

[1]William Barlow, *"Looking Up At Down": The Emergence of Blues Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), p. 13.
[2]Quoted in David Meltzer, ed., *Writing Jazz* (San Francisco: Mercury Press, 1999), p. 43.
[3]Bruce Raeburn, "New Orleans Style: The Awakening of American Jazz Scholarship and Its Cultural Implications" (PhD diss., Tulane University, 1991), p. 25.
[4]"Black History, and Jazz Music in America, a story," African American Registry. See https://aaregistry.org/story/jazz-music-and-an-african-american-art-form/
[5]See http://jazzbluesnews.com/2018/02/21/the-history-of-recorded-jazz-video-sounds-pho-

tos/. To hear Sweatman's group, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9h_0qjmnS14.
[6]Mamie Smith's 1920 recording of Crazy Blues. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qa-z4Ziw_CfQ
[7]Zola Philipp, "The Social Effects of Jazz," *The York Review*, York College, City University of New York. Accessed May 27, 2022, at https://www.york.cuny.edu/english/writing-program/the-york-scholar-1/volume-6.1-fall-2009/the-social-effects-of-jazz.
[8]*Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, March 25, 1925, p. 3. Buck and Wing dancing was made popular in vaudeville, a fast and flashy dance usually done in wooden-soled shoes and combining Irish clogging styles, high kicks, and complex African rhythms and steps such as the shuffle and slide; it is the forerunner of tap dancing.
[9]*Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, March 26, 1925, p. 1.
[10]*Northwest Arkansas Times*, Jul 14, 1941, p. 2.
[11]*Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, Apr 13, 1922, p. 1.
[12]Campbell-Bell was a department store on the Fayetteville Square.
[13]*Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 17, 1936, p. 1.
[14]*Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, May 13, 1937, p. 7. Obviously the racist themes of this party escaped the awareness of anyone associated with the event, just as the use of racist language was commonplace. It would take another 30 years before the Civil Rights movement managed to wedge such awareness into the white public's mind.
[15]Quotes and information from this author's book *Good Times*.
[16]*Northwest Arkansas Times*, August 9, 1973, p. 7.
[17]"RK's Oasis," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, March 26, 1974, p. 4.
[18]Jon Willets, email with author, 2018.

A Brief History of the Cherokee in Fayetteville

By J.B. Hogan

Fayetteville's recorded Cherokee history may be said to have properly begun on Sunday, January 13, 1839, when the John Benge Trail of Tears detachment arrived in town.[1] One part of Benge's group camped near what is now the northwest corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Stadium Drive, just below where Fayetteville High School stands today in 2024. Another part of Benge's group camped out by Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Razorback Road, near where the old Washington County Fairgrounds once stood.[2]

Some three decades before, a number of Cherokee, already responding to white settler encroachment on their traditional lands in the East, had voluntarily migrated to the Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) and part of what is now northwestern Arkansas. Known as the "Old Settlers," these early arrivals, under the leadership of Principal Chief Tahlonteskee, were in the area by 1809.[3]

In 1817, the United States Government entered a treaty with the Cherokee that in exchange for some 7 million acres of their native land in the East gave them a large tract of land in Missouri Territory (which included what would become Arkansas Territory in 1819).[4] This rectan-

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gular-shaped land, an estimated 3 million acres, ran diagonally across the region bounded in the north by the White River and in the south by the Arkansas River. The northwestern portion of the land ran from near where Mountain Home is today to about where Van Buren is, with the southeastern section running from near modern day Batesville in the north to what is now Morrilton in the south.[5]

The attendees and signees of the 1817 treaty included Major General Andrew Jackson for the United States and John D. Chisholm and John Jolly, Tahlonteskee's brother, among those representing the Cherokee.[6] When Washington County, including much of what had been known as Lovely County, was formed by treaty in 1828, the Arkansas Cherokee, now with John Jolly as Principal Chief of the Western Cherokee, were required to move into the Indian Territory.[7]

For the remaining Eastern Cherokee, the Trail of Tears, of course, had its beginnings with the signing of the Treaty of 1835 (New Echota, Georgia).[8] A number of elite Cherokee leaders signed the treaty without the approval or participation of Principal Chief John Ross. Among the some 20 signees of the treaty were Major Ridge, his son John Ridge, and his nephews Elias Boudinot and Stand Watie. Ironically, Chief Ross' younger brother Andrew Ross was also a signer of the treaty.[9]

After the signing of the Treaty of New Echota, a number of Cherokee voluntarily left their homes in the East and migrated to Indian Territory. The extended Ridge family was among this group of people who chose to leave their homeland to move west prior to the main removal.[10]

In March 1837 the forced removal of the Cherokee began with four military-supervised detachments beginning the long, arduous journey to the West that would become known as the Trail of Tears. Beginning in late August 1838, an additional 13 self-supervised but also forced removal detachments began the journey from their native homeland. The last group to reach Indian Territory was the Peter Hildebrand detachment which arrived on March 25, 1839.[11]

As noted earlier, on January 13, 1839, the John Benge detachment reached Fayetteville and made two camps just outside town. In existence for just over 10 years, the tiny mountain village of some 500 people (the total included more than 120 enslaved people) had just a few stores around its central square. On the west side was a grocery (where whiskey was sold in those days) run by brothers Willis and Riley Wallace. A number of the Cherokee gathered at the Wallace store to purchase and consume whiskey.[12]

Sometime later in the day an altercation broke out between Nelson Orr, a Cherokee, and an unnamed local man. At some point, Riley Wallace entered the fray and when the struggle turned badly for him, brother Willis Wallace jumped in and stabbed Orr with a large hunting knife[13] mortally wounding him.

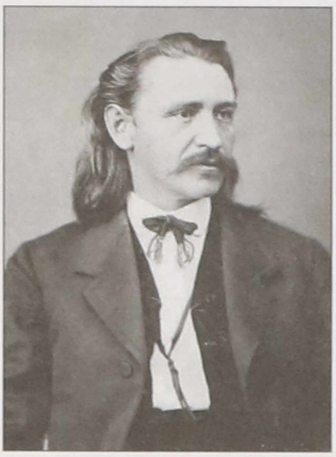
When word of the fight reached the nearby Cherokee camp, a num-

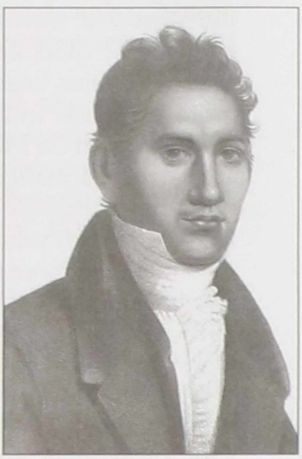
ber of men prepared to take arms against the Wallaces and Fayetteville itself. According to accounts, Captain William Coody (another of Chief Ross' nephews) managed to defuse the situation and keep the travelers from burning down the town. Nelson Orr suffered for several days before dying, and Willis Wallace was acquitted of murder charges at a trial later that spring.[14]

On June 22, 1839, three leaders of the Treaty Party, Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Elias Boudinot, were assassinated in a coordinated effort. John Ridge was surprised at his home near Honey Creek in the northeast part of Indian Territory near the Missouri and Arkansas state lines. A group of assassins dragged him outside his house and stabbed him to death in front of his wife and family, including John Rollin Ridge, his 12-year-old son.

Elias Boudinot was attacked near his home just outside Park Hill, southeast of Tahlequah, the Cherokee capitol. He was first stabbed in the back, then chopped six or seven times in the head with a tomahawk. Major Ridge was riding along the western edge of Washington County on his way to Van Buren when he was ambushed. He had paused to water his horse in the White Branch Creek about two miles from what is now Dutch Mills when a group of men hiding nearby let loose a volley of rifle fire. At least five bullets hit the Cherokee leader and he fell dead at the creek.[15]

Responding to the terror of her husband John's assassination, Sarah Bird Northrup Ridge fled with her children and their long-time teacher Sophia Sawyer to the safety of Fayetteville. Settling just west of the town square, Sarah Ridge purchased a single-story dogtrot home where she





Left, E.C. Boudinot (1835-1890) in a photograph dated ca. 1860. Photograph is in the public domain.
Center, Sarah Bird Northrup Ridge (1804-1856). Photograph courtesy the Washington County Historical Society.
Right, John Ridge (1802-1839). Painting is in the public domain; likely done ca. 1842.

and her children sought refuge. Sophia Sawyer almost immediately began teaching again and established her renowned Fayetteville Female Seminary nearby. Naturally, the Ridge children were among her first students and included young John Rollin Ridge. He would later find fame in California as a newspaperman and as a novelist,[16] being considered by many to be the first Native American novelist.[17]

After subsequently moving her family to Benton County for several years, Sarah Ridge briefly returned to Fayetteville where she died in 1856. She is buried in nearby Mount Comfort Cemetery.[18] Over time, the Ridge family had expanded the original, one-story, dogtrot home into a two-story, eastern-style Salt Box home. It still stands on East Center Street in Fayetteville and is one of the oldest and most historic homes in town.[19] [The building is known as Ridge House and is a property of the Washington County Historical Society.]

Sophia Sawyer, who had taught the Ridge family and other Cherokee young people for so long had passed two years before in 1854. She is buried in Fayetteville's Evergreen Cemetery. Her epitaph reads: "She hath done what she could."

By the mid-1850s, E. C. Boudinot, son of assassinated leader Elias Boudinot, had returned to Fayetteville from studying back East. Boudinot, or "Boudie" as he was known in town, studied law under early settler and lawyer A. M. Wilson. In 1859, Boudinot was elected to the Fayetteville City Council and that same year joined with James R. Pettigrew to establish the *Arkansian* newspaper.[20] Boudinot served as secretary to the Arkansas Secession meetings held in Little Rock in 1861. During the war, he served in his Uncle Stand Watie's Confederate Cherokee Unit.[21]

After the war, Boudinot remained a prominent person in Fayetteville, Fort Smith, and the general area. When the first railroad train reached Fayetteville on June 8, 1881, Boudinot was one of the keynote speakers.[22] He died at Fort Smith in 1890 and is buried in that city's Oak Cemetery.

Fayetteville's early Cherokee connection may have lessened with the passing of Boudinot, but it still remains. In 1923, the Methodist Western Assembly purchased land on East Mountain in Fayetteville and renamed it Mount Sequoyah in honor of the creator of the Cherokee syllabary.[23]

A small park on the northwest corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Stadium Drive has been set aside to honor the John Benge Trail of Tears detachment that camped near there in 1839. Over the years, plaques and stone monuments have been placed on the site to commemorate this part of the town's history.[24] In more recent years, the Remember the Removal Cherokee Riders, who travel by bicycle from the East each year to commemorate the journey of the Trail of Tears, have stopped in Fayetteville as they pedaled their way to Oklahoma on the last leg of the trip to honor their ancestors.

Early Fayetteville Cherokee History Timeline

January 13, 1839.

John Benge detachment camps at Fayetteville.

Cherokee Nelson Orr is stabbed to death on Fayetteville Square by Willis Wallace. Cherokee Captain William Coody defuses the dangerous situation, keeping Fayetteville from being burned down.

March 1839.

Peter Hildebrand and Richard Taylor detachments stop in Mount Comfort.

(B. B. Cannon's detachment also stops at Mount Comfort, but earlier, Christmas 1837).

March 25, 1839.

Last recorded arrival of self-supervised detachments in Indian Territory.

June 22, 1839.

Treaty party leaders assassinated.

Sarah Ridge moves to Fayetteville with her children and teacher Sophia Sawyer.

1839.

Sophia Sawyer opens the Fayetteville Female Seminary.

First students were young Cherokee females and males, including John Rollin Ridge.

1839-1844.

Sarah Ridge and family reside in Fayetteville.

1845.

John Rollin Ridge studies under Cephas Washburn at Far West Seminary in Mount Comfort.

1852.

Young Cherokee men attend Arkansas College in Fayetteville.

1853.

E. C. Boudinot residing in Fayetteville, studies law under local attorney A. M. Wilson.

1854.

Sophia Sawyer dies and is buried in Fayetteville's Evergreen Cemetery.

1856.

Sarah Ridge returns to Fayetteville, dies of pneumonia, and is buried at Mount Comfort

1859.

E. C. Boudinot (with James R. Pettigrew) establishes Fayetteville *Arkansian* newspaper.

1860s-1880s.

E. C. Boudinot ("Boudie") remains a well-known figure in Fayetteville until just before his death in 1890.

Some Recent Cherokee Connections

1922-1923.

Western United Methodist Assembly buys top of East Mountain in Fayetteville.

Mrs. Elizabeth Harwood Millar suggests it be renamed Mount Sequoyah even though it is not known if the inventor of the Cherokee syllabary was ever actually in the area.

1958.

Plaque/Monument to Trail of Tears dedicated in Fayetteville.

2000.

University of Arkansas plaque added to Trail of Tears dedication site.

1984, 2009-present.

Remember the Removal Bicycle Riders, commemorate the Trail of Tears. Fayetteville is part of the route.[25]

Table 1. 13 Cherokee Trail of Tears Self-Supervised Detachments[26]

Number	Conductor	Started	Arrived west	Days on Road
1	Hair Conrad	Aug. 28, 1838	Jan. 17, 1839	143
2	Elijah Hicks	Sept. 1, 1838	Jan. 4, 1839	126
3	Rev. Jesse Bushyhead	Sept. 3, 1838	Feb. 27, 1839	178
4	John Benge	Sept. 28, 1838	Jan. 17, 1839	106
5	Situwakee	Sept. 7, 1838	Feb. 2, 1839	140
6	Captain Old Field	Sept. 24, 1838	Feb. 23, 1839	153
7	Moses Daniel	Sept. 20, 1838	Mar. 2, 1839	164
8	Choowalooka	Sept. 14, 1838	Mar. 1, 1839	162
9	James Brown	Sept. 10, 1838	Mar. 5, 1839	177
10	George Hicks	Sept. 7, 1838	Mar. 14, 1839	189
11	Richard Taylor	Sept. 20, 1838	Mar. 24, 1839	186
12	Peter Hildebrand	Oct. 23, 1838	Mar. 25, 1839	1,544
13	John Drew	Dec. 5, 1838	Mar. 18, 1839	1,042

Endnotes

[1]As many as three Trail of Tears detachments, those of B. B. Cannon (December 1837), Peter Hildebrand (March 1839), and Richard Taylor (also March 1839) passed through Mount Comfort, but it was a separate community then and not part of Fayetteville. See the following web-

sites for more details: https://www.heritagetrailpartners.com/2015/05/mount-comfort/ and https://cherokeeregistry.com/the-emigration-from-georgia-trail-of-tears/. Accessed January 7, 2023.

[2]*Goodspeed's Washington County History, Washington County, Arkansas* (Chicago, Illinois; Nashville, Tennessee; and St. Louis, Missouri: The Goodspeed Publishing Co.,1889), pp. 185-189. The Goodspeed account is taken from Charles Summerfield (pen name of A. W. Arrington), *Desperadoes of the Southwest* (New York: W. H. Graham, Publisher, 1849). Arrington, who was in Fayetteville when the Benge detachment camped near town, incorrectly places the group's arrival in "mid-summer" instead of January when it actually occurred.

[3]Stanley W. Hoig, *The Cherokees and Their Chiefs* (Fayetteville, Arkansas: The University of Arkansas Press, 1998), pp.102-106.

[4]"Treaty with the Cherokee, 1817," *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*, compiled and edited by Charles J. Kappler (New York, New York: Interland Publishing Inc., 1972, pp. 142-144.

[5]Charles Russell Logan, "The Promised Land: The Cherokees, Arkansas, and Removal, 1794-1839," Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, Arkansas, 1997, p. 20.

[6]"Treaty with the Cherokee, 1817," Kappler, p. 144.

[7]"Treaty with the Western Cherokee, 1828," Kappler, pp. 288-292.

[8]"Treaty with the Cherokee, 1835," Kappler, pp. 439-449.

[9]Ibid., p. 449.

[10]Hoig, pp. 164-165.

[11]Thurman Wilkins, *Cherokee Tragedy: The Ridge Family and the Decimation of a People* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), p. 328.

[12]*Goodspeed*, p. 186.

[13]Some accounts indicate the large weapon was a Bowie knife.

[14]*Goodspeed*, pp. 186-188. For more information on this incident, see David Malone, "The Gazette Reports on the Fuss at Fayetteville," *Flashback*, Vol. 48, No 2 (May, 1998), pp. 2-22.

[15]Wilkins, pp. 334-339.

[16]Hoig, p. 211.

[17]Linda Lovell, "John Rollin Ridge (1827–1867)," entry, *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Accessed January 7, 2023, at https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/john-rollin-ridge-14778/.

[18]Nancy Hendricks, "Sarah Bird Northrup Ridge (1804–1856)," entry, *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Accessed January 7, 2023, at https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/sarah-bird-northrup-ridge-11942/.

[19]Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) document. Accessed January 7, 2023, at https://www.arkansasheritage.com/docs/default-source/national-registry/wa0387-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=6b913a98_0.

[20]A significant source of local information from the era, the *Arkansian* was decidedly anti-abolitionist and pro-slavery in the runup to the Civil War.

[21]Thomas Burnell Colbert, "Boudinot, Elias Cornelius (1835–1890)," entry, *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*. Accessed January 7, 2023, at https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=BO026.

[22]*Goodspeed*, p. 180.

[23]Rachel Silva, "Arkansas Listings in the National Register of Historic Places: Fayetteville's Mount Sequoyah," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (Summer 2013), pp. 158–166. The name "Sequoyah" was chosen by Mrs. Elizabeth Harwood Millar because she believed that the famous inventor of the Cherokee syllabary had camped on this very mountaintop (p. 160). There does not appear to be any evidence to support this assertion.

[24]The original plaque was erected June 16, 1958, by the National Society of the Children of the American Colonists and the Arkansas Society, Daughters of the American Colonists.

[25]For a history of the Remember the Removal bicycle riders, see https://www.npca.org/articles/1696-following-in-their-footsteps. Accessed January 7, 2023.

[26]Cherokee Registry website. Accessed January 7, 2023, at https://cherokeeregistry.com/the-emigration-from-georgia-trail-of-tears/.

Washington County Historical Society

announces

The 15th Annual Competition for Articles on History of Washington County

The Washington County Historical Society announces the 15th annual competition for two awards for articles about the history of Washington County. Each award carries an honorarium of $250. The two categories of awards are:

* The Walter J. Lemke Prize for best article on Washington County history, with preference given to subjects outside Fayetteville;
* The Lessie Stringfellow Read Prize for best article on Washington County history, with a focus on Fayetteville.

Topics can address any aspect of county history, including archeology, lives of individuals, architecture, arts and crafts, or records of institutions, and can be set in any time period. All historians – both professional and amateur – are invited to submit articles. Winners will be recognized at the society's annual meeting in October.

Deadline for submissions is June 30, 2024.

Judging is based on contributions to the expansion of the county's history; originality of the subject; and use of primary and secondary sources. Articles must be original material, and not previously published.

Submissions must be typed, and preferably include endnotes. Length – not including endnotes – can range from 2,500 words to 5,000 words. The title page should be headed: "WCHS Prize," followed by the manuscript full title, and the author's name, mailing address, telephone number, and email.

Entries become the property of the Washington County Historical Society and will not be returned. All submissions will be considered for publication in the WCHS journal *Flashback*. WCHS reserves the right to award one or no prizes. Back issues of *Flashback* are available at the Fayetteville Public Library.

Submit manuscripts by June 30, 2024, by mail or email:

* By mail: Patsy Watkins, WCHS Prize, Washington County Historical Society, 118 E. Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701.
* Email: Patsy Watkins at pwatkins@uark.edu

For questions, contact Watkins at pwatkins@uark.edu.

Part I: Grace Evelyn Reese Adkins

"New Woman Minister of Diverse Talents; Many Accomplishments"

By Dan Durning

> "Mrs. Adkins, or 'Grace' to her many friends,...is noted for her efficiency and energy. It is always, *'What will Grace Reese Adkins accomplish next?'*"
>
> Daphne Daily,
> *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 6, 1930.

Grace Evelyn Reese brought an outsized bundle of energy, ambition, and religious beliefs when she moved in 1902, age 18, to Washington County, Arkansas. Precocious as a child ("Before I started to school I had learned to read, though no one knew how or when"), she had finished high school before relocating from Mondovi, Wisconsin, to the Ozarks with her father Edwin Frank Reese (1852-1924), an older sister, and seven younger "stairstep" siblings.[1] The family had headed south soon after the death of wife and mother Ida Cook Reese (1859-1902). Grace was thrilled with her new home, later recalling, "We fell in love at sight with the hills around Fayetteville, Arkansas. It was a magic land of captivating moods and endless beauties."[2]

Grace Reese devoted her talents to three interwoven passions: educating children and young adults, promoting religious beliefs of the American Reformation movement, and writing poetry, stories, essays, and songs. These passions served what she considered the primary purpose of her life: to lead others to embrace the religious convictions that were,

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Dan Durning is a Fayetteville native and a former Duke University and University of Georgia faculty member. He now lives in Birch Bay, Washington.

she had no doubt, eternal truths. Those convictions steered her life, ultimately leading her to start her own church in 1938, because she had not found one that met her expectations, either in its message or manner. She had beseeched established evangelists to open a church in Fayetteville that would be "bedrock in basic [New Testament] doctrine, fluid in non-essentials, and so vigorous and vital that souls would find their needs met in it."[3] None did, so she moved forward on her own.

In the 36 years between her arrival in Arkansas and the launch of the new church, Mrs. Grace Reese Adkins—she married Ary Adkins in 1909—accomplished much, gained some renown, made mistakes, and suffered her share of disappointments. Leading a new church in the autumn of her life would prove to be her most exhilarating, exhausting, and heart-breaking experience.

Early Years in Arkansas, 1902-1920

Grace Reese first worked as a teacher in Washington County's rural public schools, initially at Prairie Grove and possibly other rural districts near Fayetteville, then moving in 1907 to Winslow to teach at the nearby Oak Grove school district. In Winslow she united with her father and some younger brothers and sisters who had settled there after a short time in Fayetteville.[4]

Reese taught at the Oak Grove school for two years.[5] A picture of her in front of the schoolhouse with her 40 or so students, grades one to nine, shows three of her younger siblings among her students. Her students also included two members of the William Henry Adkins (1854-1944) family,[6] which had moved to Winslow from Texas in 1903 to join a colony of Swedenborg followers.[7] W. H. Adkins served as the group's minister starting in 1908 after the departure of its first minister, who had also settled in Winslow in 1903.[8]

The Reese and Adkins families were soon linked by two marriages. The first was the 1908 wedding of Hershall Herman Adkins (1884-1960), the family's oldest son, and Laura Estelle Reese (1882-1961), one of Grace's two older sisters. The second was the June 1909 marriage of Grace and Ary Archer Adkins (1887-1965), Hershall's younger brother.[9] About the time of their marriage, Grace and Ary led the creation of a local Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and helped raise funds for a new church building, which was constructed in 1910. Lacking a full-time minister in its first decade, the Winslow First Christian Church held twice-monthly services led by visiting preachers.[10]

Grace and Ary Adkins had their first child, Mildred Grace (1910-1991), in the year the church building was completed. Three years later they had a son, Harry D. (1913-1986). Ary worked for Elmer Austin Budd (1877-1947), a resident of Brentwood, a couple of miles north of Winslow where Ary had lived before his marriage. Budd was an entrepreneurial businessman who shipped fence posts to farmers and ranchers in states

west of Arkansas and owned mercantile stores at stops on the St. Louis–San Francisco (Frisco) Railroad from Fort Smith to Fayetteville. When he hired Ary, Budd's headquarters and largest store were in Winslow.[11]

Adkins left public-school teaching soon after her marriage but took a leading role in the Sunday school of the Winslow Christian Church. Earlier, she had joined the Washington County Sunday School Association, formed in 1883 to enhance the county's religious education, and she had attended several of its annual meetings. In 1909, Adkins addressed the association's annual meeting, held in West Fork and helped organize its 1910 meeting at Oak Grove.[12] In 1917, she was elected president of its Fourth District and in 1919 and 1920 she served as the association's secretary.[13]

Growing up in Wisconsin, Grace Reese had developed a passion for writing and composing. She recalled:

> My childhood seemed to revolve around books, scissors, and pastepots.... My room overlooked the river and the hills. Beside me was my desk, made of a good box draped with bleached flour sacks, in whose farthest recess was hidden a cigar box containing poems, stories, and songs, mostly unfinished.[14]

She pursued this passion in Arkansas. While teaching between 1903 and 1909, Adkins wrote materials for public school teachers, including songs and poems to use in lessons, pedagogical advice, and a serialized short story. After leaving the classroom, she wrote mainly for religious magazines, most often the *Christian Standard*, a voice of the Disciples of Christ community, and *Lookout*, a weekly for fundamentalist churches. Among her publications in the 1910s was a serial novella titled "Girl of the Ozarks," appearing in *Lookout*.[15] In the 1920 census she gave "magazine writer" as her occupation, showing the seriousness of her interest in writing.

Adkins' most audacious writing project while living in Winslow was a book with the eyebrow-raising title of *The Sex Lives of Girls and Young Women*, issued in 1919 by the Standard Publishing Co.[16] In it, she set out the basic elements of sex education with explicit information on anatomy and physiology, but mainly warned the target audience about the fraught world around them and advised on how to behave properly in it. For example, she wrote:

> The first and most important line of defense for every girl is the inherent sense of maidenly modesty and aloofness which would say to every man who comes near, "Do not touch!" This line securely held, all the demons of perverted manhood in the universe cannot break through, except by actual violence. (p. 48)

The book asserted that "the greatest enemy to successful marriage is venereal disease," and it quoted approvingly an expert who wrote that "fully sixty per cent of the men you meet on the street are or have been infected with venereal diseases or have suffered from its toxic effects in their heredity" (p.142). To find a suitable uninfected mate for marriage (hint:

he should be a Christian who abjures alcohol, smoking, and pool halls), girls and young women should behave, dress, and apply makeup as the author advised. The book was deemed "a good book for girls," in a *Christian Standard* editorial. However, a reviewer for the academic journal *Social Hygiene* described it as "thoroughly objectionable from many points of view.... [It is a] very unscientific, stupid, and well-intentioned book."[17]

As with her 1919 book, Adkins' other writings—aside from those for schoolteachers—typically displayed an engaged mind shaped by steadfast religious beliefs. She wrote with a strong didactic voice, obvious earnestness, and a serious intellectual bent, with her poetic instincts often leavening her prose. The main purposes of her writing were to instruct, promote religious ideas, and impart moral lessons, thus her work appealed to a limited audience with compatible belief systems.

Grace Evelyn Reese Adkins. Photograph from the *Christian Standard,* June 4, 1921.

Adkins also composed songs, both words and music, and her skills as a poet and pianist were exhibited in her compositions, several of which were published in magazines for classroom teachers and in church hymnals.[18] One song ("Tis Written in his Word") was included in hymnals published in 1914 and 1916, and another ("The One That Children Love") in a 1918 songbook. Also, five other songs composed in Winslow were in a 1921 hymnal titled *Songs for Children*, issued by the Standard Publishing Co.[19]

Fayetteville: First Christian Church and Local Activism

Ary Adkins' employer, E. A. Budd, moved his company's headquarters from Winslow to Fayetteville in 1919, and the Ary and Grace Adkins family followed him there the next year. In its new location, the Budd Post and Hardware Company continued shipping fence posts, set up a lumber yard, and opened a department store on the south side of the city's square. In 1921, the company built the huge Royal movie theater next to the department store. By then, Budd owned much of the property on the square's south side, including space rented out for a café and barber shop.[20]

Ary Adkins had proven his value to Budd in 1916 when, risking his life, he had rescued horses locked in the water-filled basement of Budd's Winslow mercantile store during a flash flood that devastated the city's

downtown.[21] In Fayetteville, Ary first helped Budd run his department store and later managed Budd's lumber operations, earning a comfortable living doing work he enjoyed.[22] Even though Budd had personal problems later in life, including a 1944 conviction for voluntary manslaughter for beating to death an unmarried schoolteacher with whom he had long been romantically involved, Ary remained loyal to his boss's company.[23] Throughout his life, Ary kept a low profile. He was, according to his wife, a "quiet person, not given to activity in public work."[24] Nevertheless, he resolutely supported his wife's work.

Mrs. Adkins attended the venerable First Christian Church, established in 1849, when she arrived in Fayetteville in 1902, returning to the church in 1920 after moving back to the city.[25] She was appointed superintendent of the elementary division of its Sunday school, overseeing the junior, primary, beginner, and cradle roll classes. A 1921 newspaper story about the church's Sunday school programs observed, "Mrs. Adkins has been an inspiration for new method[s] and superintendents of the entire elementary school." Another article noted that she "has introduced modern methods of Sunday School teaching [for] juveniles in the [First Christian Church] school." She worked with the church's Sunday school program for more than a decade, but according to the church board's records, took on no other church leadership role.[26]

From her home in South Fayetteville, Adkins plunged into community affairs. In 1922, she joined a handful of other women to create a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) at the Jefferson Elementary School (then located between Church and Block Avenues and facing South Street) which her two children attended; she was elected its first president. Jefferson was the second Fayetteville school to start a PTA, and as other schools founded their own PTAs, she helped establish a city-wide council of PTA organizations.[27]

One issue of special concern to Adkins was the city schools' lack of music education. She and other volunteers raised funds to hire a music supervisor for the 1924-1925 school year. However, music education was threatened again the next year, 1925-1926, unless money was raised to pay the music supervisor. Adkins sounded the alarm in a letter to the editor, and the city PTA stepped in to provide needed funds, but only enough to pay the music supervisor for two days of work each week.[28] In 1926-1927, funds were again lacking to pay for music instruction, and again Adkins wrote a letter to the editor calling for action on offering music instruction in the coming school year and in future years.[29] She also did what she could to help raise funds, joining a group of community-minded women in 1926 to create an organization, the Fayetteville Civic Arts League, to support the cause. Adkins was the group's first vice president.

Shortly after its creation, the arts league donated money for public school music education, drawing from the yearly $1-per-member dues it charged. With this backing, the schools hired a music supervisor for part of

the 1926–1927 school year. Support of music education fit nicely with the purpose of the organization, which was, as Adkins wrote, "to promote happiness, lightheartedness, joyousness. It is to bring beauty more continually to our senses, whether in clean, well-planted streets or in the ecstasies of music."[30] Although the league never attracted the 1,000 members it wanted, it helped bring music to the city's schools and hosted numerous concerts, promoted gardening and beautification, and supported other arts.[31]

As an advocate of enriching the city's cultural life, Adkins sometimes wrote reviews of local concerts and other cultural events, and deployed her extensive collection of opera and classical music records to entertain different groups at her home.[32] In 1926 she sponsored the creation of the "Pahala Club," a neighborhood literary and arts club for women. In its early years, the club alternated "programs of a general and literary nature" with "Victrola programs from the extension department of the University of Arkansas."[33] Often the club, which was unique to Fayetteville, met in the Adkins' house. It continued its programs until the last half of the 1950s, though she was no longer involved after about 1931.[34]

Despite her active roles in the PTA, Civic Arts League, and Pahala Club, Grace Adkins was not a "club lady" who sipped tea in the city's leading women's social organizations, nor was she part of the University of Arkansas intellectual set or of ecumenical groups sponsored by the city's high-attendance churches. She was, at heart, a do-gooder who wanted to "tone up our community atmosphere a bit" by improving the schools, the public library, and music and nature lore education.[35] She joined groups that supported those causes.

She also had other causes, motivated by her moralistic mindset. She opposed "sinful" behavior of all kinds, and although she never sought public office, she periodically waded into policy issues with letters to the editor. For example, in 1926 she wrote two letters to the newspaper complaining about untoward activities, especially gambling, occurring at the county's annual carnival.[36] She asked in the first letter, "[D]o you know it is said that the path of a carnival can be traced by the trail of venereal disease it leaves behind." In a few of her letters, she also expressed peeves about cultural trends; in one, she complained that children no longer "sing sweet, childish songs" on radio; instead "many of the songs they sing are not only the songs of grown-ups, but the songs of the 'fast' grown-up set."[37]

As she helped lead different organizations during the 1920s, Adkins became adept at publicizing her activities and causes. She grew proficient in writing press releases for the local newspaper, an increasingly valuable skill. She also excelled as a hostess, often inviting guests to her home for committee meetings, Bible training courses, church parties, prayer meetings, and other events. Her study, stuffed with books and strewn with clippings and magazines, functioned as a meeting room and church annex during most of her adult life.

In 1925, at the age of 41, Adkins had her third child, Lois. About

that time, she and her family moved from South Fayetteville to a farm they had bought on the Springdale Highway (Hwy 71), just north of the Veterans Hospital.

Rural Evangelism and the Bethany Bible Camps

In the years following Lois's birth in 1925, Adkins embarked on religious activities outside the First Christian Church, specifically in rural evangelism. She became what her friend Thomas Elmore Lucy (1871-1947), a poet and itinerant entertainer, termed "a community missionary in rural centers." In doing so, she followed in the footsteps of E.S. Mobley (1869-1946), whom she had met in about 1905 while teaching in Prairie Grove. At the time, Mobley was the district evangelist of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Northwest Arkansas. Lucy, hired by Mobley in 1905 to be the song leader in a revival campaign, described their work as follows: "Together, we drove his horse and buggy over those hills, clay-banks and gullies, enjoying the fellowship of the genial, common hill folk, holding revivals under 'brush arbors,' winning souls for the kingdom...."[38]

Mobley, whom Lucy suggested was Adkins' mentor, introduced her in about 1926 to the Christian Church's Fifth Sunday organization, comprised of Disciples of Christ ministers in Washington County.[39] Most of these ministers served small community churches, such as the one Adkins had helped create in Winslow. Assisted by the Fifth Sunday group, she embraced the role of community missionary, spending most Sundays aiding small rural churches with their religious services.[40]

To address what she saw as a lack of leadership in these churches, Adkins initiated a project in summer 1927 to develop future "spiritual leaders" in rural communities. She organized, with the backing of the Fifth Sunday group, the Bethany Bible Camp, a week-long gathering primarily for young people living in rural areas.[41] The camp's daily schedule included Bible classes in the morning, recreational activities and free time in the afternoon, and worship services in the evening. It was inexpensive; campers paid three dollars or the equivalent in food stuff. To keep costs low, they slept in tents pitched on the grounds of the Woolsey community school. It was open to any young person who wanted to attend, regardless of his or her church affiliation.

The camp was a hit, attracting "more than three score" attendees.[42] Speaking to Fifth Sunday ministers, Adkins reported, "The young people were happy and well fed, and enthusiastic for the continuation of the camp each year." She said it was her intention "to enlarge the curriculum and bring it within the reach of every boy or girl who desires preparation for Christian service...."[43]

The first Bethany Bible Camp was a pioneering achievement for the Disciples of Christ movement. At the time, Adkins thought it was the first such camp sponsored by a Christian Church.[44] Later, she wrote that

the initial Bethany camp "was one of the first two camps in the modern Christian Service Movement for young people. The other was located in Evieside [Erie Side], Ohio. Both camps started in 1927 without knowledge of each other and have served as models for many years...."[45] Whatever their genesis, summer service camps became a major emphasis of Disciples of Christ churches. The number of such camps grew from two in 1927 to 12 in 1929, 197 in 1946, and 416 in 1957.[46] According to the *Encyclopedia of the Stone Campbell Movement*, "Summer camp experiences continue to be one of the most important ministerial vocation recruitment paths that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has as part of its past and its present...."[47]

After the success of the first Bethany Bible camp, others followed each year from 1928 to 1932. They were held in Woolsey until the 1932 camp moved to the grounds of the Christian Church in West Fork. These camps mostly adhered to the same organizational principles (low cost and nondenominational attendance) and schedule (morning study, afternoon recreation, and evening worship) as the first one. The number of campers in 1932 reached nearly 100.[48]

Adkins' rural evangelism and the Bethany camps led to her ordination as a minister in August 1930.[49] With her new credential, she visited the pulpits of more rural churches and spent more time attending to the needs of congregations in outlying parts of the county. Her work was satisfying but required sacrifices from both her and her family. She believed she could accomplish much more if she had a home church backing her efforts.

In 1929, the year before her ordination, Adkins took on leadership of a local organization outside the church but related to it. She served as president of the Fayetteville chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and continued in that role through 1932. She also was the publicity director for the WCTU regional organization, comprised of the organization's chapters in Northwest Arkansas.[50] Adkins aided the WCTU crusade against repeal of the 18th Amendment by writing a pro-prohibition column for the local newspaper and lecturing on the topic, often at the First Christian Church.[51]

She ardently believed in prohibition, calling alcohol "an uncontrollable evil" that must be crushed. She warned in her speeches, "We must not only educate [young people who have grown up since the 18th Amendment became a law] in the evil effects of alcoholics, but we must tell them facts of how immeasurably worse were the saloon days, with a drunken father, brother or son in the home; the degradation and shame and the heartbreaks."[52] No doubt Adkins was dismayed when the amendment was repealed at the end of 1933.

[Part II of "Grace Evelyn Reese Adkins" will appear in our Summer 2024 issue.)

Endnotes

[1]Grace Reese Adkins recalled the 1902 move to Fayetteville in a 1969 letter to the editor in which she referred to her younger siblings as "young motherless stairsteps." "To the Editor… From the People," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, May 6, 1969, p. 4.

[2]See the autobiographical sketch, "Grace Reese Adkins," in Florence Woodlock McCullough (compiler), *Living Authors of the Ozarks and their Literature* (Joplin Missouri: Self-published, 1945), p. 3.

[3]Grace Reese Adkins, "Rugged Paths to Victory," *Restoration Herald*, Vol 18 (1), September, 1952, p. 5.

[4]"Claiborne Mobley on Air Tonight Over WLS, Chicago," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, February 4, 1937, p. 1. This article mentioned that Mobley was "one of Mrs. Grace Reese Adkins' early pupils when she taught at Prairie Grove." Her 1907 presence in Oak Grove is documented by a photograph of her and her students in Velma Brotherton, *Images of America: Washington County, Arkansas* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing Co., 1999), p. 12. Adkins did not have a college education but attended a few classes at the University of Arkansas. She mentioned studying Arkansas history in summer school "under Dr. J. H. Reynolds in the first decade of the present century" in "To the Editor…From the People," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, July 24, 1964, p. 8. She also regularly attended the mandatory Washington County Teachers Institute. See "School Teachers of the County in Session," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 11, 1906, p. 2.

[5]"Woman Minister Speaks at Oak Grove," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 29, 1930, p. 8. This article noted that Adkins had taught two terms at the Oak Grove school some 20 years earlier. Also see Winslow Centennial Book Committee, *Winslow, Arkansas, Past and Present, 1905-2005*. Reproduced, 2005, p. 68.

[6]Brotherton, *Images of America*, p. 12.

[7]The Adkins family had lived in Iowa for many years before moving to Texas in 1900. According to Robert Winn and Lyda Winn Pace, several families that adhered to the Swedenborg theology moved to Winslow during the early 1900s, suggesting a coordinated effort to set up a colony there. Winn and Pace wrote, "The Swedenborg followers in Winslow comprised only a few families: the Adkinses, Duncans, Franciscos, and Kings were among the leaders." The authors noted, "After the first decade of this century, little was heard about the Swedenborg theology which had seemed to have such favorable prospects of becoming an important cultural influence in the community a few years earlier." Robert G. Winn and Lyda Winn Pace, *Winslow: Top of the Ozarks* (Fayetteville: Washington County Historical Society, 1983), p. 25.

[8]W. H. Adkins' service as a Swedenborg church minister is documented in these newspaper articles: "Winslow," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August. 5, 1908, p. 2, and "R. Loomis Dies, Buried Near Winslow," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, February. 28, 1935, p. 8. The Winslow Swedenborg colony was one of only three that existed for an extended time in Arkansas. The other two were in Hackett (Sebastian County) and Hot Springs. Jonathan S. Rose, Stuart Shotwell, and Mary Lou Bertucci, eds. *Scribe of Heaven: Swedenborg's Life, Work, and Impact* (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Swedenborg Foundation, 2005), p. 11.

[9]"Marriages, Adkins-Reese," *New-Church Messenger*, 94(16), Apr. 15, 1908, p. 252. This monthly publication of the Swedenborg church noted that W. H. Adkins had presided at the marriage of his son. The June 10, 1909, marriage of Ary Adkins and Grace Reese is documented at Ancestry.com. Arkansas, U.S., County Marriages Index, 1837-1957 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

[10] Winn and Pace 1983, p. 24, and Winslow Centennial Book Committee 2005, p. 48. (See footnotes 5 and 7)

[11] Winn and Pace 1983, p. 14. Budd had post yards and mercantile stores in Brentwood, Woolsey, West Folk, Porter (Schaberg), Chester, Walker's Switch, Rudy, and Mountainburg. Also see, Means Wilkerson, "Budd Fence Post Co., Pioneers in Own Field," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, July 3, 1928, p. 11.

[12] "Sunday School Convention," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 10, 1909, p. 3. This story mentioned that Adkins was on the program of the Washington County Sunday School Association convention held at West Fork. Brotherton, *Images of America*, p. 110, contains pictures of the attendees of the association's conventions held on July 25, 1908, at Valley Grove and in

1910 at Oak Grove. Both places are near Winslow. Grace Reece is seated in the front row of the 1908 picture, but she cannot be definitively identified in the 1910 photo.

[13] Mrs. Adkins is mentioned as president of the fourth district of the Washington County Sunday School Association in "Fourth District S.S. Convention August 27," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 22, 1917, p. 3. At the 1919 convention, she made a report as secretary of the association and presided over a discussion of Sunday schools for children. "County Sunday School Convention May 26-27," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, May 24, 1919, p. 1. At the 1921 convention, Mrs. Adkins led the children's section of the convention. "County Sunday Schools to Meet Here Tuesday," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 27, 1921, p. 1.

[14] Autobiographical sketch in McCullough (compiler) 1945, p. 3. (See footnote 2)

[15] Mrs. Adkins reported soon after the novella was published that she had rewritten it, doubling its length, and planned to publish it as a book. "Item." *News and Notes* [of the Author's and Composer's Society of Arkansas], 1(1), December 24, 1918, p. 3. The book was not published, and I have been unable to locate the *Outlook* issues containing her story.

[16] Grace Reese Adkins, *The Sex Lives of Girls and Young Women* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing Co., 1919). Accessed February 5, 2022 at https://archive.org/details/02420010R.nlm.nih.gov/mode/2up. Also see, "Grace Reese Adkins Author of New Book for Women and Girls," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, April. 1, 1920, p. 1.

[17] "A Good Book for Girls, Editorial Review of the book *The Sex Life of Girls and Young Women*," *Christian Standard*, January 3, 1920, p. 353, and H.W.B., "*The Sex Life of Girls and Young Women*" (Review), *Social Hygiene*, VI(2), April 1920, p. 303. A *Fayetteville Daily Democrat* story written a decade later noted, "The book has received much favorable criticism on its frankness and idealist treatment of the subject." Daphne Daily, "New Woman Minister of Diverse Talents; Many Accomplishments," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, Auguat 6, 1930, p. 8.

[18] "An October Riddle" (poem), *The Youth's Instructor*, LXIV (42), October 15, 1916, p. 12; "The Bumblebee" (song), *The Progressive Teacher and Southwestern School Journal*, September 1919, p. 22, "Clytie," (song), *The Progressive Teacher and Southwestern School Journal*, October 1919, p. 41, and "George Washington" (music sheet), *Normal Instructor and Primary Plans*, Vol. 31 (4), February 1922, p. 55. All were accessed on the Google books website.

[19]The 1921 hymnal was Carrie B. Adams and Lillie A. Farris (eds.), *Songs for Children* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing Co., 1921), accessed on Google books. The songs included "Serving Jesus," "He is Risen," "God's Helpers" (motion song), "I Will Not Fear," and "Winter Lullaby." Hymnal.org shows that Mrs. Adkins wrote six songs that appeared in one or more of 10 hymnals (not including the Adams and Farris book), the first published in 1914 and the last in 2011. The website provides a list of Adkins' publications and songs.

[20]Anthony Wappel with J. B. Hogan, *An Illustrated History of the Fayetteville Square, 1928-2016* (Fayetteville: Signature Books, 2017), p. 56. Budd's stores and the Royal Theater were destroyed in a 1940 fire but were quickly rebuilt. See http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/49024 and "Fire Sweeps Two Business Buildings," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, January 15, 1940, p. 1.

[21] Robert G. Winn, "A Night of Fire and Flood in Winslow," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, November 11, 1973, p. D1.

[22] A 1923 advertisement mentioned Budd and A. A. Adkins as managers of Budd's store. "Budds Department Store" (adv.), *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, March 2, 1923, p. 3. Fayetteville city directories from the 1930s through the 1950s listed Adkins as "Mill Manager" (1939), "Yard Manager," (1951 and 1954), Superintendent (1957), and "Plant Foreman"(1959) of Budd's lumber yard.

[23] Denele Campbell, *Rex Perkins: A Biography* (Self-published, 2015), pp. 68-79. Budd was sentenced to five years in prison but was pardoned by Arkansas's governor before he was incarcerated, .

[24] Adkins, "Rugged Paths," 1952, p. 5. (See footnote 3)

[25] "To the Editor…From the People: Historical Recollections," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, May 6, 1969, p. 4. Also see Roy Roberts, "The First Christian Church: One Hundred Twenty-Five Years of Discipleship, 1848-1973." Mimeograph, 1973.

[26] "Exhibits Stimulate Interest of Parents in Church Education," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 23, 1921, p. 1; "Mrs. Adkins Has Two Articles Accepted," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 26, 1921, p. 3; and "Sunday Rally Day at First Christian," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 27, 1922, p. 1. The church board records are in Box 1, Folder 7, Fayetteville First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Records, MC 1954, University of Arkansas Library

(Special Collections).

[27] "Parent-Teachers' Meeting Well Attended," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, November 5, 1921, p. 4; "P.T.A. to Hold Social Meeting," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 16, 1922, p. 2; "Council Seeking to Establish PTA Throughout County," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 2, 1924, p. 1; and "Jefferson Group Hears PTA History," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, February 16, 1935, p. 6.

[28] "From the People," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 26, 1925, p. 2. Grace wrote, "[M]usic is far more than one of the trimmings of life. It is a practical thing—a stabilizing power in a somewhat topsy-turvey world. It develops the higher emotions so necessary to a successful democracy, knits the social fabric of the community together, reduces delinquency, furnishes wholesome employment for the hours of recreation, and like the vitamins in our food, it vitalizes and energizes us, quickens our pulse and stimulates our mind."

[29] "From the People: Concerning School Music," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, July 20, 1926, p. 2.

[30] The quote is from "Civic Arts League Asks Delegates from Other Groups Friday," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, October 25, 1928, p. 6. Also see "Permanent Officers, Board, Elected by Civic Arts League," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, November 3, 1926, p. 1; "Dwight Moore Heads Civic Arts League, Powell, Music Dept.," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, December 6, 1928, p. 1; Grace Reese Adkins, "The Music Column: The Civic Arts League Program," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, November 9, 1926, p. 2; "Mrs. Adkins Heads Civic Arts League; F. O. Kerr Vice President," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 3, 1929, p. 6; and "Civic Arts League Plans Big Program," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, October 5, 1929, p. 4.

[31] "Civil Arts Club of 1,000 Members, Community Auditorium, Proposed; Organization Meeting Sunday, 3 p.m.," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 21, 1926, p. 1; Adkins' letter to the editor, August 26, 1925 (see above footnote 28); and Adkins, "The Music Column," November 9, 1926, p. 2 (see footnote 30). The difficulties of funding music education in the public schools were overcome, at least temporarily, when the city school board announced that beginning in the 1928–29 school year, it would pay the salaries of music instructors. "School Music Made Permanent by Board," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 22, 1928, p. 1.

[32] See "P. T. A. Meeting Treat to South Side Music Lovers," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, June 22, 1922, p. 4. "Blames Audience for Opera Failure," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, October 17, 1925, p. 1; "From the People: An Appreciation," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, October 2, 1928, p. 2; and "From the People: "Thank You, Mr. Burnett! And Mr. Tovey," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, May 7, 1929, p. 2.

[33] According to the club's founders, Pahala was the Sioux word for "hilltop." The club was described as follows, "Membership is entirely informal and consists of all in the neighborhood, old and young, who are interested. The idea of the club had its inception during Music Week when several women who attended and enjoyed the concerts said, 'Why can't we have a little neighborhood club, and use the record programs from the University?' It was intended to furnish wholesome enjoyment and growth during vacation, but the idea has 'caught on' amazingly and quite a number who were not originally thought of as neighbors have become interested." "Pahala Club 'Something Different'," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 25, 1926, p. 6. Also see, "Classic Program by Pahala Club," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 19, 1926, p. 3.

[34] Adkins sponsored the club until 1931, then was no longer active in it. She last participated in the club in February 1931 when 10 members of the club met to piece a quilt. She gave a vocal solo, playing her own accompaniment. "Pahala Club Pieces Quilt," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, February 20, 1931, p. 8.

[35] "From the People," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, February 8, 1926, p. 5. Adkins pleads for actions to improve the community.

[36] "From the People," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, March 16, 1926, p. 2 and "From the People: More About Carnivals," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, March 26, 1926, p. 2.

[37] "From the People," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, December 13, 1933, p. 2. She wrote, "I wish to ask through the medium of your paper why we so seldom hear sweet, childish songs on the lips of young singers?"

[38] Thomas Elmore Lucy, "The Shining Cave," *Arkansas Gazette*, June 23, 1946, p. 37.

[39] Mobley had left the full-time ministry before 1910 to become a government agriculture specialist and he headed the Washington County Farm Bureau for more than a decade while he remained a part-time minister. "H.S. Mobley, State Farm Leader, Dies," *Arkansas Gazette*, June 11, 1946, p. 6.

[40] "[S]he has helped with church societies, community rallies but especially in teaching those

communities which have no leaders. Durham and Greenland are now under her supervision." Daphne Daily, "New Woman Minister of Diverse Talents," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 6, 1930, p. 6.

[41] Mrs. Adkins explained, "Its purpose is to provide Bible training for 'teen age boys and girls,' which will serve as a foundation for further development in Christian leadership." "Bethany Bible Camp Enrolls Large Class; Local Teachers Return," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*,, July 22, 1927, p. 5.

[42] Ibid., p. 5; Grace Reese Adkins, "An Experiment in Propaganda," *Christian Standard*, October 13, 1928, p. 1045; "Pentecostal Fires at Bethany Camp," *Christian Standard*, August 24, 1929, p. 809. Adkins detailed the design and operation of summer Bible camps in Grace Reese Adkins, "Summer Bible School Camps," *The Pentecostal Evangel*, May 26, 1934, pp. 6-7.

[43] "Ministers' School, Upbuilding of Bible Camp, Rally Subjects," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*,, April 3, 1928, p. 6.

[44] Ibid., p. 6. According to Adkins, "So far as is known Bethany camp was the first conference of its kind for young people ever put on."

[45] "Bethany Bible Camp Pioneered in Modern Christian Service Movement for Youths," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, July 24, 1948, p. 2. While undoubtedly Adkins' Bethany Bible Camp was one of the first such camps, it did not receive the recognition it deserved. *The Encyclopedia of the Stone Campbell Movement* mentions the Erie Side camp in Ohio, but not the Bethany Camp, as important in the early history of the Bible camps. Ruben G. Bullard, "Camps: Christian Churches/Churches of Christ," in Anthony L. Dunnavant, et. al. (eds), *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2004), pp. 147-148.

[46] See "Young People's Service Camps," *The Restoration Herald*, 8(6), June 1929, p.1; "197 Camps in 30 States, Canada This Year," *Christian Standard*, April 3, 1948, p. 211; and "416 Christian Service Camps Planned for 1957," *Christian Standard*, April 27, 1957, p. 253.

[47] Bullard in Dunnavant, et. al. (eds), *Encyclopedia*, 2004, p. 147. (See footnote 45)

[48] "Bethany Bible Camp with 20 Attending, Others Expected," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, July 16, 1929, p. 6; "Bible Class Faculty Is Announced," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, July 22, 1930, p. 2; "Bible Camp Plans Made," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, July 9, 1931, p. 1; "Bethany Camp Opens Sunday," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, July 23, 1932, p. 5; and "The Week in Review," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 4, 1932, p.10.

[49] "Grace Adkins is Ordained," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 4, 1930, p. 1.

[50] "WCTU to Meet Tuesday at First Church," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 30, 1929, p. 5; "Mrs. Grace Reese Adkins Again Heads WCTU," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*,, October 8, 1930, p. 3, and "District Convention at Lincoln on May 4," *The Advent-Journal (Gentry)*, May 19, 1932, p. 1.

[51] Grace Reese Adkins, "WCTU Column," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*,, February 19, 1931, p. 4 and Grace Reese Adkins, "WCTU Column," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, March 5, 1931, p. 4. Also, "Need of Temperance Instruction for Children Stressed," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*,, October 28, 1929, p. 8; "Mrs. Adkins Discusses Status of Prohibition," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, September 24, 1930, p. 2; "Mrs. Adkins to Speak at Twilight Service," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, October 27, 1930, p. 2; and "Makes Plea for Better Temperance Education," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, November 4, 1930, p. 2.

[52] "From the People: Says Gang Rule Would Change Dry Law," *Fayetteville Daily Democrat*, August 25, 1932, p. 2. She wrote, "The repeal propaganda which has been sweeping over the country is gang-ism pure and simple. Some big moneyed interests which wanted to escape the payment of enormous income taxes determined to shift the burden of taxation back on the poor man's beer.... The brewers wanted to profit again from the miseries of women and children, and the crooked politicians wanted their share of the graft." Addressing the 1931 District WCTU meeting, she charged that "The wet metropolitan press is trying to intimidate a dry majority through a campaign of ridicule and propaganda." "District Convention Held Here Tuesday," *(Gentry) Journal-Advance*, May 21, 1931, p. 1.

Veterans Administration Medical Center Chapel Named in Honor of the Rev. Dr. Maurice Roberts

By Maylon Rice

Amid the bustling hallways of the third-floor sterile surgical suites and post-surgical recovery wards of the Fayetteville Veterans Administration Medical Center's main building on the 90-year-old campus,[1] is a small, quiet respite space, just the right size for an intimate chapel to connect with a higher spiritual power for peace, strength, and solace in a time of stress.

The tiny chapel, scarcely bigger than a small hospital room, with seating for barely a dozen chairs, is nothing like the grandiose and well-appointed prayer chapels often found in conventional churches, but a room befitting its quiet, yet economical namesake, Rev. Maurice Edward Roberts, a Fayetteville resident for more than 30 years until his death in 2011.[2]

A retired United States Navy chaplain, Rev. Roberts served the naval armed forces for more than 50 years, spending most of the last 26 years as a local V.A.M.C. chaplain in Fayetteville. Many local citizens will remember Rev. Roberts as a faithful college sports fan of the U.S. Naval Academy teams, while also a spiritual leader of all the Midship cadets at the academy, where he served as Chief of Chaplain Services from 1975 to 1977, on its Annapolis, Maryland, campus.[3]

Each fall, as the traditional Army vs. Navy football game drew near in late November or early December,[4] Rev. Roberts and his wife Ann would

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Rev. Maurice Roberts, former chaplain at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Fayetteville.

once again erect a blue and gold banner at their modest home on North Valarie Drive in east Fayetteville.[5] The banner, which they had flown at their home on the Annapolis U.S.N.A. campus, read:

Happy Holidays
Go Navy—Beat Army!

His last Navy assignment was that of Senior Chaplain at the Naval Academy before retiring as Captain from active miliary service, according to COP officer Bradley Gordon, Deputy Public Affairs officer for the U.S.N.A.[6]

Many in his Fayetteville neighborhood remember his holiday banner as well as his lifelong love for the navy and especially the Naval Academy.

He once told of a pre-game meal blessing where he got "a rise" out of the seemingly lethargic Navy Academy football squad.[7]

"They (the team) seemed a little down at the evening meal before the game the next afternoon," Rev. Roberts said.

"As everyone stood, I began a usual blessing, but I interjected the words, 'And Lord, if tomorrow, we fail to do our best and the outcomes is less than we desire,' when suddenly, the entire football squad, loudly began a chorus of, 'No, No, No, We will win!'

"With each sustained NO," Rev. Roberts said, "they were banging their spoons on the table. It was quite the ruckus."

The blessing, however, quickly continued and the next afternoon, Navy prevailed, 38-10, over the Army cadets. While Rev. Roberts served at the academy, the Navy Midshipmen were 2-1 over the Army Cadets.[8]

This past year, 2023, the annual Army vs. Navy game saw its 123rd anniversary. The Naval Academy leads that series, 63-53 with seven ties (16) since the first game played in 1890 at West Point, New York, where Navy won that contest, 24-0.[9]

Rev. Roberts was also known locally as a thoughtful, quiet, well-read man and board member and the decades long treasurer of the Fayetteville Public Library (1997-2006).[10] He was named treasurer for his availability. Per Arkansas statute, only a library board trustee can sign or endorse checks.[11] Rev. Roberts was always available to stop by the library, at its former location at 211 E. Dickson Street,[12] and at the new library building, at 401 W. Mountain,[13] during his tenure on the board, sometimes almost daily to sign checks and other financial documents. Louise Schaper was the director of the Fayetteville Public Library while Rev. Roberts served on the board.[14]

Rev. Roberts was born March 3, 1927, in Emporia, Kansas, to the Rev. and Mrs. Edward S. Roberts. His father was a Presbyterian minister.[15]

He was an honor graduate of Waukesha High School, Waukesha, Wisconsin; Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin; and McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, and earned his Doctorate in Ministry at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis.[16]

His career as a Navy chaplain spanned 22 years, beginning as Sea Bee Battalion Chaplain with Mobile Construction Battalion One in Argentia, Newfoundland, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Other tours in his career included the Amphibious Squadron 12 and senior chaplain aboard a super carrier, the U.S.S. Forrestal. He served one year in Southeast Asia stationed in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam war.[17]

He served as chaplain at the Naval Air Station (N.A.S.), Kingsville, Texas, N.A.S. Argentia, Newfoundland, and as Force Chaplain, Submarine Force of the Pacific Fleet and at subbase Pearl Harbor.[18]

After his active military service ended,[19] Rev. Roberts served four years as associate pastor at the Old Stone Church in Cleveland, Ohio. The Old Stone Church is also known as the First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland and is the oldest building on the city's Public Square; it was built in 1820.[20]

Rev. Roberts, retiring to Fayetteville, then began his 26-year service at the V.A. hospital as Chief of Chaplains.[21]

Rev. and Mrs. Roberts often traveled the across the United States and the globe. In his later years he was often a fill-in Presbyterian minister across Northwest Arkansas. He was a member of the Presbytery of Arkansas and served as the parish associate of the First United Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville. He was also a board member of the Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries of Bossier City, Louisiana.[22]

His first love of being a military chaplain made him a great fit for the V.A.M.C. in Fayetteville. As VA Chaplain, he continued to care for the lives and the spiritual needs of our veterans and their families, as he had during his active military ministry, as well as caring for the members of the hospital administration and staff.

After his death, the V.A.M.C. Chapel, where he prayed and counseled so many patients and their families, was named in his honor. A program of the event listed several anonymous testimonials to Rev. Roberts' character and demeanor.[23]

One contributor wrote: "Chaplain Roberts enjoyed visiting with people, and getting to know some of their stories. He made people feel important and valued, whether they were 10 years old or 90 years old."[24]

"He was a man of prayer, who always would take time to pray for the concerns of the ones he interacted with. When you had a concern or a burden, you could count on him to listen attentively, and always to offer a word of wisdom, and a word of prayer."[25]

"Chaplain Roberts was a Navy man through and through. His home and lawn and office were decorated with years of Navy memorabilia."[26]

"He was a humble man; despite all his accomplishments over 50 years of ministry and military service, Chaplain Roberts always wanted to know how others were doing. Even at the end of his life, when he had a neck fracture, when he was physically very weak, when he was becoming forgetful at times, he would still remember a name and face. Instead of focusing on his predicament, he would immediately ask his visitors, 'How are you doing? How is your family? What can I pray for you about?'"[27]

Rev. Roberts died July 5, 2011, at his home in Fayetteville. He is buried in the Fayetteville National Cemetery.[28]

The Roberts Chapel will continue to be a place of solace, of reflection, and of personal prayer—an oasis from the medical, physical, and emotional storms of life; a place for all faith-groups to encounter their God.

One of the few mementoes on the wall is a quote done in calligraphy from Eccleasties, Chapter 38, a group of verses on honoring a physician.

Sadly, there is no photograph of Rev. Roberts in the chapel; his always smiling, helpful eyes are absent in this sanctuary of peace and prayer.

Endnotes

[1]Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks. Accessed August 11, 2023, at https://www.va.gov/fayetteville-arkansas-health-care/
[2]Obituary, Nelson Berna Funeral Home, Fayetteville. *Northwest Arkansas Times*, July 7, 2011.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Author's personal reflections with Dr. Roberts, 1996-98.
[5]*Polk's City Directory for City of Fayetteville* (Kansas City, Missouri: R.L. Polk & Co.).
[6]Email to Bradley Gordon, Deputy Public Information Officer, U.S.Naval Academy, 8-15-2023
[7]Author's reflections with Dr. Roberts during 1996-98
[8]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy_Midshipmen_football.
[9]Ibid.
[10]Fayetteville Public Library electronic office archives of past boards of directors and members.
[11]Arkansas Library Statutes, Arkansas State Library. Accessed at www.library.arkansas.gov.
[12]*Polk's City Directory for Fayetteville.*
[13]Ibid.
[14]Fayetteville Public Library, archives, boards of directors and members.
[15]Author's personal reflections, 1996-1998.
[16]Obituary, *Northwest Arkansas Times.*
[17]Ibid.
[18]Ibid.
[19]Ibid.
[20]Old Stone Church.org/history accessed 8-13-2023
[21]Obituary, *Northwest Arkansas Times.*
[22]Ibid.
[23]Email from Crystal L. Davis-Noble, Fayetteville V.A.M.C., August 11, 2023.
[24]Ibid.
[25]Ibid.
[26]Ibid.
[27]Ibid.
[28]Obituary, *Northwest Arkansas Times.*

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Make a Gift That Gives Back to You

You can leave a legacy for the Washington County Historical Society and secure a guaranteed income stream during your lifetime. How? Through a charitable gift annuity at Arkansas Community Foundation.

A charitable gift annuity is a contract between you and Arkansas Community Foundation. Under the arrangement, you transfer assets to the Foundation in exchange for a commitment from the Foundation to pay you a fixed sum for the remainder of your lifetime. After your death, the remaining principal and income is retained by the Foundation and used to support the programs of the Washington County Historical Society.

Current Rates (subject to change)			
Individuals Ages	Rate	Couples Ages	Rate
65	4.7%	Husband 65, Wife 60	4.0%
70	5.1%	Husband 70, Wife 65	4.4%
75	5.8%	Husband 75, Wife 70	5.8%
80	6.8%	Husband 80, Wife 75	5.3%

Rates are for illustration purposes only. The Arkansas Community Foundation will design a gift annuity to benefit you and the Washington County Historical Society.

Through a charitable gift annuity, you can increase your retirement income, postpone capital gains tax, and receive an income tax deduction, all while making plans for a significant legacy gift to your community. Find out how you can support the Washington County Historical Society through a charitable gift annuity.

Contact Stacy Keenan
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Flashback
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